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NEW APPROACH TO GERMANY?

IN the course of his speech on Tuesday, Mr. Bevin repudiated the role of "intermediary" between America and Russia, and asserted that Britain had her own contribution to make to world peace and would ask for discussion of her policy on its merits. No one will dispute this position, but many will search in vain for a statement of the British contribution in the pedestrian periods of the Foreign Secretary's speech. To the solution of Middle Eastern problems he had nothing to offer but a string of platitudes; on the Dardanelles issue nothing but an affirmation of support for the American attitude; and, if attention fastens on his contribution on Greece, where his policy is already vehemently criticised by the W.F.T.U. and by a chorus of American commentators, Britain will be under heavy fire from the start in the United Nations discussions.

Only in the case of Germany did Mr. Bevin have anything to say which was constructive and representative of the peculiar contribution which British Social-Democracy should be offering to a world anxious to find an alternative both to American Free Enterprise and Russian Communism. Denouncing the great trusts which formed the basis of German militarism, Mr. Bevin said that Britain would take steps to nationalise, in her own Zone, not only coal, iron and steel, but also the chemical and heavy engineering industries; and she would support similar plans for the whole of Germany when the peace settlement was discussed. While yielding to French claims on the Saar, he wisely resisted the demand for the separation of the Ruhr and the Rhineland from the Reich; and he sketched out a constitutional plan which strikes a fair mean between the complete centralisation proposed by the Russians and the so-called "federalism" of Mr. Byrnes, which would in fact deteriorate into *Kleinstaaterei*.

This statement on Germany was long overdue. If it had preceded Mr. Byrnes' Stuttgart speech and the fusion of the British and American Zones, much misunderstanding and suspicion would have been avoided. Better late than never: at long last the Labour Government has taken a stand which challenges the crude American attempt to fight Communism by restoring free enterprise and capitalist "democracy" as understood by American Big Business. If Mr. Bevin will fight this through as the basis for a unitary solution for Germany, and add to it a land reform designed to break the power of the Junker class, he may succeed in avoiding the partition of Europe and in stopping the drift into ideological blocs. By taking issue with America on the economic basis of a restored, genuine German democracy, as he has taken issue with Russia on the political basis of freedom, he can re-assert the independence of British policy and demonstrate Britain's ability to achieve Social-Democracy in foreign as well as domestic affairs. If he actually does this, then Tuesday's declaration on Germany will rank in importance alongside the Government's Indian policy as a positive British contribution to world peace.

But will he do it? Impatient Labour backbenchers, studying Mr. Bevin's record in the Middle East, Spain and Greece, cannot be blamed for showing a certain scepticism. Too often in the past fifteen months Mr. Bevin has aired impeccable general principles, only to make nonsense of them in the day-to-day execution of foreign policy. He has stated his determination to help the *fellahin* against his land-owning exploiter, but tolerated throughout the Middle East puppet governments which imprison trade union leaders and suppress Left-wing Parties. He has denounced "interference from outside" in Greece, while British troops by their presence permit a Royalist dictatorship to be installed. He has talked of a positive British contribution, but made no protest against overt American efforts to impose political conditions on countries in Eastern Europe which need American financial aid. If Mr. Bevin is to remove the doubts of his own supporters, then he will have to make the principles which he has laid down for Germany the principles of British policy throughout the world.

It is too early yet to judge whether Mr. Bevin's German policy is an isolated expedient or the beginning of a new approach. Mr. Bevin is an empiricist, and he must have observed the uneasiness and dismay among his own supporters during the earlier passages of his speech and the eager exultation of the Opposition at every and any sentence which could be given an anti-Russian interpretation. The attempt to maintain a bi-partisan foreign policy, acceptable to Mr. Churchill and the adherents of the Anglo-American alliance, yet somehow in conformity with Socialist principles, is doomed to failure. The experience of this session has proved that, under the pressure of events, Socialist principles remain generalisations, while anti-Bolshevik prejudices are translated into action.

Mr. Churchill understands this. Welcoming Mr. Bevin's statement, he clearly saw the proposed revival of German industry as Western rearmament against the Soviet Union, suggested all-party conversations on "security," and asked if it were true that the USSR has 200 divisions on a war-footing in Eastern Europe. It was odd to raise the all-important issue of security and armaments without also asking how many divisions equal one atom bomb.

Trade Unions in Congress

The General Council of the T.U.C., overwhelmingly supported by the Brighton Congress, has now made it clear that much of the recent agitation about the "closed shop" was ill-founded. While it will help any constituent union which is trying to secure one hundred per cent. trade union membership in a particular firm or industry, it is not seeking, as Mr. Deakin put it, "to establish a closed shop as between union and union." It is legitimate for established unions to campaign against dissident groups or against non-unionists, whether or not they are encouraged by employers; and, by this moderate claim, the T.U.C. has put itself in a strong position. No doubt, in special cases such as the L.P.T.B., there will be some further difficulties. But now this question has been settled in principle at Congress, we may hear a little less about the T.U.C. "drive towards dictatorship." The Congress debates on production have been less satisfying. Trade unionism, which finds it difficult to shake off its defensive and restrictive tradition, is still cautious about the demands for greater output. True, the Government's exhortations are endorsed by the T.U.C. and passed on to the workers, but union leaders are reluctant to take on themselves the responsibility of working out a co-ordinated production and wages policy, as has been done with marked success by the C.G.T. in France. This is not merely a job for the Cabinet. But the T.U.C. seems content to give a general approval to the Government's plans and remain aloof from the task of energising both its national and local organisations. The much-publicised meetings held earlier this year between union executives and a number of Ministers seem so far to have produced few results. It is not necessarily a question of putting forward comprehensive, distinctive T.U.C. proposals in contrast to those of the Government—though there are differences, notably between the mineworkers and Mr. Shinwell—but of using the trade union movement on the regional and factory level as an integral part of the national effort without which all attempts to establish improved wages, conditions and welfare will be fruitless.

Dollar Diplomacy

In their radio reports to the American people on the results of the Paris Conference, both Mr. Byrnes and Senator Vandenberg spoke with restraint. Both deprecated talk of the inevitability of war and prescribed "friendship with firmness" as the remedy to be applied by the State Department's bi-partisan policy for the "increasing tension," which they both admitted to exist, in relations between the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. How this formula—a more diplomatically worded re-definition of "toughness"—will work out in the forthcoming sessions of the U.N. Assembly, in relation to Turkey's renewed refusal to accept condominium with the Soviet Union over the Straits, and in the meetings of the Big Four to draft the Paris Treaties, remains to be seen. What is clear, meanwhile, is that the American conception of firmness towards countries within the Russian Zone of influence takes the form increasingly of discrimination in the provision of financial assistance. Credits for Czechoslovakia, whose press has been guilty of commenting adversely on "American imperialism," are cut off with an abruptness which recalls Ambassador Patterson's declaration that Yugoslavia would not receive "another dime except over my dead body." On the other hand, there is talk of U.S. loans to Italy and of American relief shipments to Greece when Unrra breaks up. Poland, it is anticipated, will look in vain for Anglo-American help. The financial agreement with Great Britain is still held up, and its conclusion will probably not be facilitated by the latest arrests of some of M. Mikolajczyk's supporters, including the editor of the Peasant Party paper, for "subversive" activities — presumably "associating" with the organisations of extreme Right-wing terrorists.

Elections in Germany

The local elections in Germany, whose results, so far as Berliners are concerned, are reviewed by a correspondent on a later page, are, in one sense, of academic interest. Except in the Russian Zone, and there only under tight directives, the elected councillors will enjoy, under Military Governments, little or no power to frame or execute policy. Nevertheless, the voting at least gives an indication of the pattern of political thinking in Germany. In the Russian Zone, the United Socialist Party seems able to hold the votes of roughly half the population; what proportions of that vote represent Communists and Social-Democrats there is no means of knowing. In the American and French Zones the Catholic Christian Democrats are, as was to be expected, in a large majority. In the British Zone, owing to the complicated and unsatisfactory method of voting, the picture is not so clear; but it looks as though the Social-Democrats and the Christian Democrats are about equal in numbers, with the Communists a long way behind. As for Berlin, 20 per cent. of the votes secured by the United Socialist Party (which in that area is synonymous with Communism) compares with nearly 50 per cent. gained by the Social-Democrats. Thus, in contrast to the South and even the British Zone, the Berlin electorate appears to be decidedly Left of Centre. Both in Berlin and in the British Zone, however, there was probably a good deal of "anti" voting. In other words, in the British Zone the Christian Democrats may well have attracted the votes of all who resent the British Administration, with which the Social-Democrats have tended to become identified; and in Berlin the fear of Russia, entertained especially by the considerable middle-class elements, may have prompted a number of them to vote for Dr. Schuhmacher's Social-Democratic Party in the belief that it, rather than the Parties of the Right, would be the most effective German political force against the U.S.S.R.

Parties in France

The pre-election position of the two major French Parties, the Communists and the M.R.P., has now been clarified. The Communists have declared for a Left-wing coalition based on the programme drawn up a year ago by the *Délégation des Gauches*—that is, Communists, Socialists, Radicals, the C.G.T., and the League of the Rights of Man. The United Front thus constituted would exclude the M.R.P., and would have to some extent an anti-clerical basis. The M.R.P., in turn, has also hinted, somewhat more vaguely, at a coalition, which is to consist of "all true democrats." That this term is designed specifically to exclude the Communists, as well as the Right-wing extremists of the P.R.L., has been made clear by M. Schumann, who has roundly asked the electorate to register a vote which will enable France to be governed "by Bidault without Thorez." With a hand thus held out to them from both flanks, the Socialists have taken refuge in a formula stipulating that they will enter a coalition only if the other partners in the Government "subscribe to a minimum programme of specific aims corresponding to the aspirations of the working class." This non-committal formula would seem to leave M. Blum's Party free to combine with the Communists or the M.R.P. Either combination, however, would subject the unity of the Socialist Party to considerable strain. M. Blum and his immediate entourage are temperamentally perhaps more in sympathy with M. Bidault than M. Thorez; but coalition with the M.R.P. would cost the Socialists what remains to them of proletarian support. Moreover, notwithstanding the view of its members who were Deputies in the late Assembly—that the constitution approved by the referendum should be given "a fair trial"—the Central Committee of the M.R.P. has announced that its participation in any future government will be conditional on agreement to revise the constitution so as to give the President the powers demanded by General de Gaulle, and to modify the method of election to the Second Chamber, so as to conform with Gaullist views. This would be a condition difficult for the Socialists to swallow.

Persia Swings Right

The break between the Tudeh Party and the Prime Minister, Qawam-es-Sultaneh, has precipitated a new internal crisis in Persia. Qawam has always been embarrassed by Tudeh support, but he could not dispense with it until his personally sponsored Persian Democrat Party was strong enough to provide a substitute in the still-postponed elections. In recent months, he has been staffing the electoral committees with his own supporters—a step which is the immediate cause of the withdrawal of the three Tudeh Ministers. He has also refused to reinstate the Tudeh governors of Isphahan, Teheran and Kermanshah, and concluded a settlement of the southern revolt which is very favourable to the insurgent tribesmen. There is, moreover, no sign as yet that the Russo-Persian oil company to exploit the northern fields will be set up by the end of October, as agreed at the time of the crisis last March. The agreement with the southern tribesmen follows very much the same pattern as that concluded with Azerbaijan. There is to be a provincial council for Fars (the seat of the revolt), an increase in its representation in the Majlis, and a number of administrative and social reforms. Mr. Bevin has trenchantly denied any British complicity in the revolt and there is little doubt that Tudeh propaganda is prone to extravagant allegations. But whether or not there has been any secret instigation by British agents—and when, in the past, such activities occurred in Persia and elsewhere they were naturally disowned in London—Qawam has undoubtedly decided that there is enough moral support in the presence of British troops in Iraq and in a revolt directed rather at the Russophiles than at him, to risk an open break with the Tudeh. Qawam is an able opportunist. His present desire is to remain Prime Minister after the elections. If that purpose is best served by swinging the central Government back to dependence on the old reactionary groups, he will do it with as few scruples as he settled with the Azerbaijan Democrats and accepted Tudeh representatives in his Cabinet.

No Truce in India

The Muslim League has now made it clear that its entry into the Interim Government implies no truce in the communal struggle. It has used its influence among the tribesmen of the North-West Frontier to stage a series of violent demonstrations against Pandit Nehru during an official tour. Booed by angry crowds at Peshawar, he had to face stones and even bullets in the Khyber Pass. The purpose of his visit was to inaugurate a new relationship of confidence between the tribesmen and the first Indian National Government. It was hoped that the tribes would be as friendly to Congress as are the Pathans and Red Shirts of the Frontier Province. Nehru had plans to discuss with their *jirgas* (councils) for economic aid and for the linking up of the tribal areas with the Province. The event proved that Muslim fanaticism, when the League rallies it, can be turned as easily against an Indian Government as against the British Raj. From Eastern Bengal there came simultaneously news of barbarous attacks by the Muslim majority, led by imported gangs of hooligans, upon the Hindu minority. Rumour spoke of the slaughter of thousands, of the burning of villages, the abduction of women and the forcible conversion of tens of thousands to Islam. That all this happened over a wide area, is undeniable, though the killed may number hundreds rather than thousands. The Governor flew to the spot and Indian troops have been sent to restore order. But as yet there is no news of any steps being taken to identify and deal with the group which organised these outrages in the eastern districts, as formerly in Calcutta. Nor is there news of any action by Mr. Jinnah to restrain his followers. In this atmosphere of reckless communal strife, the chances that the Central Government with its new group of Muslim Ministers can function seem slender.

The Trade Talks

The Preparatory Committee for the World Trade Conference has retired behind closed doors, and the public will not find out much about it until it produces the reports on which its various sub-committees are at work. Certain things, however, are already fairly well-known about the attitudes of the participants. First, even with the Russians absent, the Americans do not expect their extraordinary "Proposals" to go through in anything like their original form. Secondly, the Empire talks of a few weeks ago showed the Canadians much nearer to the American point of view than the other Dominions, but only in the sense of hoping more, and of having more to hope, from a real liberalisation of the commercial practices of the United States. It has been made clear that there will be no simple abolition of either Imperial preferences or the right to make special trade bargains except in conjunction with really drastic revisions of the American tariff, involving a door much wider open to imports of manufactures as well as of materials into the United States. It is also clear that most of the delegations want to know whether the sweeping American declarations in favour of "full employment" have any practical meaning in terms of American home economic policy.

The Free Saturday

The results of Messrs. Philips's inquiries into the experience of firms which have adopted the five-day working week are of considerable interest, even though the investigation was on too small a scale to be taken as conclusive. Out of 56 answers only one suggests that the abolition of Saturday work had any adverse effect on output or on any other factor affecting industrial efficiency; and even this one firm did not positively assert that there had been such an effect. As against this, 17 firms said that the change had increased production, 25 that it had reduced absenteeism, and 19 that it had improved labour recruitment. Twenty more firms said that there had been no effect on production, meaning presumably that production had been maintained in face of the change. About a third of the firms offered no opinion on this question. Now that the cotton industry is leading the way, under its new agreement, in going over *en bloc* to the five-day week, there will be an opportunity of testing the effect over a wider field. The results may well be rather less favourable; for there is no doubt that the workers (especially the women) mostly like the change, and output is more likely to be affected favourably where the free Saturday is regarded as a special privilege than where it is applied over an entire industry. Nevertheless, the virtual unanimity of the firms which have adopted the system—not in one industry, but in a number working under widely different conditions—that there has been no adverse effect on output is strong evidence in favour of a change for which, on social grounds, there is an unimpeachable case.

The Kluang Trial

In his further statement on October 15, dealing with the irregularities in the conduct of the Kluang Trial, Mr. Bellenger made it abundantly clear that the Government had no alternative, on legal grounds, to quashing the sentences. Indeed, in summarising the effect of the irregularities, he went so far as to say:

> The evidence was neither elicited nor applied in such a way as to establish either the guilt of those who were really guilty or the innocence of all those who were really innocent.

This statement adds point to the general criticism of court martial procedure which appeared in this and other journals last week.

Apology to Judge Advocate-General

In our article on the subject of courts martial last week, we referred to the public impression that, under pressure in the House and from outside, the Government had found an easy way out in the discovery of "irregularities." We now acknowledge that our comment that, if the Government is frightened, the Judge Advocate-General may find in the record of the trial such gross "irregularities" as to invalidate the whole proceedings was an unjustifiable suggestion that, in advising the Secretary of State for War, the Judge Advocate-General was influenced by motives of political expediency and not by judicial considerations. We intended no reflection on the Judge Advocate-General's professional integrity and we gladly take this opportunity of withdrawing unreservedly and apologising to Sir Henry MacGeagh for an unwarranted personal implication.

PARLIAMENT: Three Big Debates

Tuesday

THE Conservatives had selected coal and housing for their first major attacks on the Government after the summer recess. Objectively, they were right. The coal situation is almost desperate, and there is an ominous slowing-up in the erection of permanent houses. An Opposition free to concentrate on the Government's real weaknesses could have built up a formidable indictment and won some public support. But this Opposition is not free. The success of the "lunatic fringe" at Blackpool, represented in the House by such characters as the excitable Mr. Osborne, Sir William Darling, who wears his fancy dress as though it was everyday attire, and poor old Waldron Smithers, has shackled the Tories even more closely to the wheel of free enterprise. It whirls them round in bleating and aimless agitation. Hence these big debates have taken place in an atmosphere of undergraduate levity.

No one really believes that without nationalisation there would have been plenty of coal this winter. Yet this is the position which the Opposition is constrained to argue. Captain Crookshank opened the debate quite competently, but his main argument was that Mr. Shinwell, as reported in the Tory press, had contradicted himself. This gave the Minister a chance which he took with plenty of vigour. After a bit of rather dreary sparring—Mr. Shinwell always gives himself time to get the feel of the House—he made his best speech of the Session, clear, well-documented and candid. After this, despite a sound maiden effort by Douglas Jay, who was immediately followed by Major Lloyd-George, there was nothing to debate. The Tories knew it, and only a handful were present to hear their last speaker struggle vainly to kindle a spark of fire in his stomach. Hugh Gaitskell, eager to show his mettle as a debater, could find nothing to be pugnacious about.

The housing debate was even worse. The Minister of Health has not solved the labour problem—and he knows it. But Major Manningham-Buller, in his opening speech, airily dismissed this subject in one sentence, and returned to the fallacious distinctions between public and private enterprise. He portentously advised the Minister to "use private enterprise more," and caused some amusement by paying a tribute to the City of Birmingham, unaware that it now has a Labour majority. If there is one thing Nye Bevan hates more than folly, it is smugness. Indignant that he had not been matched against a worthy opponent—as usual Mr. Churchill was absent—he effortlessly knocked the poor Major round the ring for forty minutes, treating him with all the disdain of a professional for a conceited amateur sparring partner. When the Major had been "carted," the Labour back benches listened attentively to a serious speech by Megan Lloyd-George, and to a defence of his record at the Ministry of Works by George Hicks. As usual, the constructive criticism came from the Government side, this time from Dr. Corlett, Dr. Comyns and Lt. Col. Lipton. Then the indefatigable Crookshank bobbed up again to wind up for the Tories. No one knows what they would do without him. He can debate on anything for any length of time, and on the thinnest of briefs. Finally, Charlie Key made an excellent factual summary of what has been achieved. He and Nye Bevan are a strangely assorted pair, but if there were a Parliamentary championship, the Ministry of Health would certainly win the doubles.

Foreign affairs revived the spirit of the Tories. The dejected mood on Monday evening was replaced on Tuesday by an alert self-confidence. To-day, they seemed to be whispering "We shall be able to watch the discomfiture of those damned Socialists opposite." They were not disappointed. Apart from his proposals for Germany, Mr. Bevin's rosy brief was received in silence or, as in the case of Greece, with muttered dismay by his own supporters. Only Mr. McGovern, Mr. Crawley and Mr. Chamberlain, returned from a trip round Spain at the regime's expense, seemed wholly satisfied. The Tory attitude, best expressed by Mr. Boothby, was that it was a good thing that Germany was not to be revived to check Russian expansion. Platts-Mills launched a frontal attack but got lost in Rumania; and it was left to Lyall-Wilkes, concentrating on Greece, to make the first serious and critical comment on the Government's foreign policy. Already it is evident that, without far more vigorous and positive leadership from the Front Bench, there will be serious trouble for the Government in the next Session. PHINEAS

TARGETS

INDUSTRY AND THE CONSUMER

THE most recent official statement on the distribution of man-power in Great Britain has assured us that by August, 1946, there were more people working on manufactures for the home market than there were in July, 1939. The building and civil engineering industries, on the other hand, were about 8 per cent short of their 1939 labour force; and the distributive trades and miscellaneous services were both more than 20 per cent short. The total working population was larger than that of 1939 by 356,000; but there were 142,000 fewer men, and 494,000 more women. The armed forces and auxiliary services still accounted for 1,756,000, as against 480,000 in 1939, and there were 1,375,000, as against 990,000, producing for export. The unemployed had fallen from 1,270,000 to 359,000; but there were also 540,000 demobilised persons who had not yet taken up employment.

This is the general statistical picture against which we have to measure the prospect of a recovery of the supply of consumers' goods. It is a plain and indisputable fact that, for as far ahead as it is possible to see, Great Britain is going to be short of man-power in relation to the needs of the people. It is not going to be easy to find enough workers to keep our basic industries and services going, to maintain factory production at a high enough level to meet the demands of both the export and the home market, and to spare as many men as the military authorities will demand. It cannot be easy to meet all these needs, even if we manage to get the available man-power distributed to the best possible advantage; and if we allow any of it to run to waste, or to be wrongly assigned, the result is bound to be vital shortage somewhere. That is an inescapable fact.

It is also a new fact, which calls for a thorough revision of our thinking about the whole labour problem. Never in living memory have we been faced with conditions of total labour shortage—not merely scarcity of some particular kind of skilled labour during a boom, but shortage of every sort of able-bodied persons available for work. Over and above this, the workers there are will be on the average a lot older than industry has been used to; and there will be an acute scarcity of young men. Young women will be less scarce, not only because they will not be called up for military service, but also because it looks as if more of them will remain in employment, at least for a time, after marriage—indeed, unless they do, there simply cannot be enough labour to go round. Now, older people in general find it difficult to learn new trades; and accordingly a large part of the labour force, especially the male labour force, will be less adaptable than in the past, with fewer boys available for training, and fewer able to go straight on after training to skilled work.

Industry will have to adapt its methods to these changed conditions; and industrial training both for adolescents and for grown-ups who need to change their jobs will become much more the State's affair. There will have to be a big permanent expansion of both Technical Schools and Colleges and Training Centres for adults; and we shall need to keep a very sharp look-out in order to ensure that nobody at all is allowed to rot away in long-term unemployment, instead of being trained for an alternative job. It will be difficult to maintain full employment only if we let our industrial structure remain too rigid to allow of every transference from job to job. One great task of the Government is to get the Trade Unions to see this, and to co-operate to the full; and this cannot be secured—as the President of the T.U.C. admitted at Brighton—unless the fear of "surplus labour" can be exorcised from the minds of the workers.

At present, the industries which supply the consumers' needs are standing nearly at the end of the man-power queue. The armed forces are allowed to stand at the head, with a demand which is in our view exorbitant, beyond our resources, and over any long period, sheerly impracticable. Where we managed with under half a million in 1939, how can we possibly afford to spare a million and a quarter today, with a reduced total male working population and with young men at a high premium. ? Next in the queue after the armed forces at present come building, coal and a few basic services, which, having no compulsory power, are badly short, but have high priority among the rival claimants. Then come the export trades, which need a largely increased labour force if exports are to be expanded to anything like 75 per cent above the pre-war level. Only after these comes manufacture for the home market; and behind it distribution and domestic service bring up the rear.

In the short run the problem of shortages is clearly insoluble, even apart from import difficulties; for with existing plant, which is in many cases obsolete or worn out, a labour force of pre-war size cannot possibly meet both current demands and the large arrears that have accumulated since 1939. As new plant becomes available, output per head ought to increase considerably, above all in the trades making mass-produced consumers' goods. But for the time being the finishing trades and the trades which make machinery are competitors for the same types of labour; and there is the further problem that it is not easy to re-equip a factory on up-to-date lines without closing it down for some time. Indeed, it is often simpler to build a brand new factory; but if that is attempted just now, the labour and materials cannot be got without detriment to the building of essential houses.

In face of all these obstacles, the shortage of consumers' goods cannot be at all speedily overcome; and whether it can be overcome at all depends on our success in building up exports, so as to pay for necessary material supplies. No doubt, conditions of supply will get gradually easier for many classes of goods—especially for those which make no great call on either scarce materials or highly skilled labour. But, of some things if not of others, shortages are bound to persist for a considerable time, because there simply are not, until large-scale reorganisation of many industries has been carried through, enough labour, enough plant, or enough material to go round.

Coal and building are, of course, the outstanding examples of scarcities which cannot be quickly overcome. Reorganising the coal industry is a long-term problem, soluble only when mechanisation and the driving of better underground roads have reduced the amount of labour needed. Building shortage, even with the greatest possible drive to increase the number of skilled workers and to improve output, is bound to last for a good many years, because of the vast arrears that have piled up during the war.

Neither coal production nor housing is a matter out of which anyone, no matter how well he may try, is likely to get any credit in the near future. The target, in both matters, is to make the best of an immediately bad job, and at the same time to make all possible speed with major measures of long-term reorganisation. The coal problem is certainly soluble in the long run, and as far as one can judge the correct steps are being taken to solve it under the new Coal Board's auspices. About housing it is not possible to feel anything like so much confidence. Houses are not merely scarce, but also quite intolerably expensive; and so far new methods of construction seem to be making no contribution at all to bringing costs down. Yet it simply must be possible, with proper standardisation and mass-production in well-equipped factories, greatly to reduce both the cost of producing many components and the cost of putting them together.

This housing business must be tackled, not only as an immediate matter of rushing buildings up as fast as possible, but also as a long-term problem of getting costs down to a more reasonable level. The entire industry is a muddle, and it is impossible to feel that the existing division of responsibility for it between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Works offers any prospect of getting things really straightened out. There ought to be a Ministry of Building and Housing, responsible for the entire job; and no Civil Service opposition ought to be allowed to stand in the way.

As for the industries which are the affair of the Ministry of Supply and the Board of Trade, steel is the source of the greatest disquiet, not only because of the retreat—we hope only temporary—over nationalisation, but also because of the very low production target which the industry appears to be setting for itself for next year. If this is due to coal shortage, there may be no remedy; but no other cause can excuse a plan which involves large steel imports and heavily reduced exports, and a total output a long way short of evident needs. Steel is a key industry because it affects both the capacity of many trades making consumers' goods and the re-equipment of industries whose plant needs renewal on account of technical obsolescence or war arrears.

In the manufacturing industries there is the problem of what to do with the Reports of the "Working Parties" now that they have been received. These reports contain a large number of useful recommendations that need acting upon, not sporadically, but under conscious central guidance in the light of a well-thought-out general industrial plan. Moreover, this guidance needs to be accompanied by the use of effective powers against monopolistic and restrictive practices; for without such powers and the will to use them it is positively dangerous to encourage the growth of any sort of "industrial self-government." The Labour Party is pledged to tackle this question of monopoly; and it should be tackled by the creation of an instrument that can be used to deal with it over the entire field of industry and trade. If labour is short, and firms have to bid high for it, there will be very strong temptations to try to meet the cost by rigging prices against the consumers, instead of by increasing efficiency. This is what the Labour Government has to stop if the consumers are to get their needs as nearly satisfied as the real shortage of productive resources allows. Nor is it a question that can safely be left over for a year or two; for it is essential to prevent the establishment, under cover of cries about "self-government" and "partnership" in industry, of a powerfully entrenched restrictive regime.

In general, then, the targets for the Labour Government in this field of consumers' supplies are, first, to secure a right distribution of the available man-power and to reduce the demands of the armed forces to the lowest possible point; secondly, to develop much better facilities for training and transfer; thirdly, to tackle the reorganisation of the building and building materials industries in a thorough-going way; and fourthly, to set up effective agencies for dealing with monopoly and restriction as a necessary pre-condition of the successful working of plans of reorganisation to be carried through in the industries which are to be left in private hands. There is a further problem, of finding effective incentives to labour to replace the dying incentives of fear and hunger; but that is a matter which can better be dealt with in a later article.

BERLIN VOTES

Berlin, Tuesday

THE election results surprised even the Social Democrats. They had hoped for hardly more than 40 per cent. of the votes, and evidently gained from the Christian Democrats as well as Unity Party, the remarkable point being their success even in Unity strongholds such as Pankow and C.D.U. districts such as suburban Zehlendorf. The Social-Democrats scored 50.7 per cent. in the American sector, 50.8 in the British, 52.8 in the French and 43.2 in the Russian. The Unity Party obtained 10.7 in the British, 19.5 in the French, 29.4 in the American and 29.4 in the Russian. The former distinction between working-class and middle-class districts has been obliterated by the social mix-up and migration of the bombed-out.

There is much sober heart-searching this morning in the Unity Party, but Grotewohl's first words to me gleefully emphasised the defeat of the bourgeois parties. Then he affirmed readiness for constructive collaboration with the Social-Democrats. Schuhmacher, receiving me in a sparsely furnished middle-class flatlet, confirmed readiness to collaborate with all constructive elements. He agreed with my suggestion that a good unifying factor might be presented by the common desire (loudly voiced in S.P.D. and S.E.D. election campaigns) to try Papen, Schacht, Fritzsche and others for crimes against the German people. When I asked for a definition of his widely publicised conception of the United States of Europe, he emphatically denied envisaging a "Western Bloc," adding that a Bloc frontier would divide Germany, whereas a united Germany is an essential premise of a united Europe.

In an impromptu broadcast after the results were known, Schuhmacher gave an emphatic warning against repeating the failure of the Weimar Republic to touch vested interests and to proceed with Socialisation. Afterwards he confirmed to your correspondent that he meant a capital levy and the confiscation of estates over one hundred hectares with indemnities just large enough to prevent destitution.

Kuelz, the Liberal Democrat leader, whom I also interviewed, expressed emphatic unwillingness ever to merge with the Christian Democrats, and was rather scornful about their "Christian Socialism." He said that if he wished to negotiate with Socialists he would rather choose genuine Marxists, but is prepared to collaborate with anybody on any practical and constructive issue. So is Jacob Kaiser, the C.D.U. leader, but, unlike Kuelz, he claims to be quite content with the election results. I asked him to comment on the assertion of all other parties that the Christian Democrats are a hide-out for crypto-Nazis and reactionaries and to state how his Party guards against such intrusion. Kaiser professed that he felt maligned, and added that it is all very well for Schuhmacher to shoot his mouth off about the Russian Zone where, his Party having been ousted, he has neither hold nor responsibility. But since the Christian Democrats were an important part of the anti-Fascist Bloc within the Russian Zone, they had to take a more responsible line.

Schuhmacher told me that on the strength of his election victory he intends to apply for permission for Social Democrats to compete with the Unity Party within the Russian Zone. I am reliably informed that there is little likelihood of such a demand being considered by the Soviet authorities in the near future, though there is a good chance of this aim being realised after a period of collaboration between all parties concerned. It is significant that in all my talks with the four Party leaders I heard much of that old German political term *Kuh-handel*—meaning shrewd horse-dealing in filling coalition key posts. During the next weeks such sober bargaining will cool off the hot air of electioneering.

HEINRICH FRAENKEL

A LONDON DIARY

NYE Bevan was in brilliant form last Monday when he turned the tables on his Tory critics and showed that the delay in building Government houses was not the fault of the Ministry or the local authorities, but of the building contractors themselves. Private enterprise was falling down on the job. This is a justifiable retort, but of course it is no answer to a problem which, if it isn't solved, may bring the housing programme in industrial areas to a standstill in three or four months' time. At present, wherever there is full employment, the building worker has no incentive to work hard or even to work at all on Council housing. An extreme instance is the situation in Coventry. Here in miniature you have the whole problem of full employment without a wages policy, and the consequent maldistribution of labour. Official figures show that there are 13,500 building workers and labourers in the city, over twice the number in the pre-war period when some 500 houses were being built every year. But of these 13,500 workers precisely 445 were employed on the Corporation's permanent housing programme at the end of August; and by the end of September the figure had sunk to 383—less than one man per house under construction, and about one-sixth of the labour required to fulfil the contracts already completed.

* * *

What are the building workers doing? About 8,000 of them have left the industry and taken higher-paid jobs in the factories. Quite often ex-Servicemen, having completed their training as building workers, immediately obtain jobs in engineering. There is an acute shortage of semi-skilled and unskilled labour and industrialists who are not concerned to keep prices down in a sellers' market, are willing to pay very high piece rates. No builder's labourer who can earn £7 a week on piecework in a factory is going voluntarily to return to the building trade, unless he can earn as much there. If he does go back to his trade, under present conditions, he will probably prefer to work on "maintenance" inside the factory, where he can get pleasant indoor work in the winter months and will not be bothered by Government regulations forbidding a wage packet above the district rate. As a result, the factories are building up inflated maintenance staffs, and undertaking all sorts of repairs, while outside the overcrowding grows worse and worse.

* * *

But there's worse to come. Just under 3,000 workers are actually building or repairing houses; 2,559 on private enterprise jobs and 383 on municipal permanent houses. (The number employed on pre-fabs, of which nearly 900 have been erected, is only a few score.) This proportion is the crux of the problem which George Tomlinson has got to tackle. He won't change it simply by laying down, as he has, that four corporation houses must be built for every one put up by private enterprise. It is obvious that municipal housing is being handicapped by the notorious regulation 56 AB, which forbids piecework rates in the building industry. The contractor working on his own or for private enterprise can evade this regulation by all sorts of extra payments "under the counter." But when he is building for the Corporation, this can't be done, as all accounts are strictly audited. The result is that, if an industrialist wants a building job done, it is completed rapidly and efficiently. There is money to be made, both by the builder and by the bricklayer. Meanwhile, the Council contracts are indefinitely delayed. The builder has no incentive to complete work quickly, nor the building worker to work hard. Both get less out of Council work and are perfectly ready to switch over in the middle of a municipal job to a nice little bit of profitable private enterprise. I know that the building unions are opposed to piecework. But a Labour Minister cannot tolerate a situation where a regulation forbidding piecework is enforced in regard to the Government housing programme, and evaded, with the connivance of the unions, on profitable, private enterprise jobs.

* * *

Every time anyone in the House of Commons tries to explain the devastating results of the decision to requisition houses in Germany for B.A.O.R. families, Mr. Hynd replies that everything is in order, that suitable alternative accommodation has been found for the evicted Germans, and that furniture is not requisitioned. In last Thursday's adjournment debate on Germany, when a number of well-informed speeches were made from the Government side, he went so far as to say in his reply that the project for housing British personnel on a big scale in Hamburg had the full support of the German trade unions and political parties. None of the evidence that reaches me from Hamburg confirms this assertion. As to the requisitioning of furniture it is certain that attempts to remove it wholesale are still made. A few weeks ago, to cite one instance, the aged chairman of the Hamburg trade unions was away in Bielefeld for the first Zonal trade union conference. In his absence it was decided to requisition his furniture, though his house is surrounded by those of well-known Nazis who were left alone. Only a last minute intervention stopped the requisitioning. Other news from Germany supports the view, endorsed by numerous journalists and officers, that the encouragement of democratic institutions remains intolerably slow. Despite all the talk, only three trade unions have yet been sanctioned to operate in the British Zone and obstacles are constantly put in their way. The other day, Whitehall had agreed that four German delegates should attend the International Transport Workers' conference in Antwerp. After long delays, passports and visas were obtained. Then, at the last moment, the Control Authorities refused to change their Marks into Belgian Francs! I could provide many other examples of obstruction and I am reluctantly coming to the conclusion that John Hynd, overwhelmed by the appalling bureaucracy of Norfolk House, which is often many weeks behind even in paying the salaries of Control officials, has no idea whatsoever of what is being done in his name in Germany.

* * *

H. G. Wells had a religious phase. It produced a sympathetic study of the Soul of a Bishop and a most brilliant modern version of Job called *The Undying Fire*. But in general Wells was no more respectful to God and to religious institutions than he was to kings and aristocratic forms of government. I was therefore glad that no memorial service of the conventional kind was arranged after his death. But it is proper that there should be public homage paid to H. G. and I am glad to see that a meeting, arranged by a committee representing the Society of Authors, The International P.E.N., National Book League and British Association, will take place at the Royal Institution, 21, Albemarle Street, London, W.1. on Wednesday Oct. 30th at 3.0 p.m. The speakers are G. D. H. Cole, Sir Richard Gregory, David Low, Desmond MacCarthy and J. B. Priestley. Lord Beveridge will preside and tickets (which are free) can be obtained by writing to the Secretary, Wells Tribute Meeting, The British Association, Burlington House, London, W.1.

* * *

The first issue of *Contact* was rightly described in this journal as a "publisher's frolic." The excellent matter was obscured and indeed rendered almost unintelligible by the jumble of types, changes in colour and quality of paper and other eccentricities of printing. The new volume, *Britain, Between West and East*, is comparatively conventional, though I still find too little distinction between advertisements and text, and I am still annoyed by what is surely the very ugly notion of printing photographs on the top of drawings. However, the articles are now legible and many of them are first class.

American journalists are not a respectful tribe, but the stories which the columnists tell of President Truman break new ground in newspaper irreverence. The latest I've seen is that Mr. Truman was late for his press conference because his joints were so stiff when he woke that he had a lot of trouble getting his foot into his mouth.

CRITIC

THE OLD BUFFER

SOME empires of antiquity collapsed without declining,
While some declined at ease to break the fall,
But Britain's ocean empire, where the sun is ever shining,
Has no idea of passing out at all.
Unshrinkable, unsinkable,
Its exit is unthinkable
For Britain rules by her Imperial Right—
An empire she must ever be,
For she will never, never be
A puppet or a pawn or satellite.

Britannia of her own decay will never be spectator
While broadly based as mistress of the sea,
She will not fall from monitress to merely mediator
In a landscape of imperial debris.
Played out, laid out,
Listed for a fade out,
She will not from Dominion tamely pass,
Her empire tradition
Rebuts the vile suspicion
She's a Power of the secondary class.

Britannia, overburdened with world responsibility,
Successor to the grandeur that was Rome,
Will not consent to function with a satellite's servility,
Encircled in her little island home.
Shattered, battered,
With empire outposts scattered,
The centre of a non-existent whole,
An ex-imperial nation,
She would suffer degradation
By taking on an underbelly's role.

Britannia's glorious epitaph if ever it is written
Will never show her in the second place,
She will not be recorded as the buffer that was Britain,
A greater Power's forward battle base.
Strangled, mangled,
Or generously star-spangled,
Her servile plight could not be overdrawn,
So whatever she may suffer
She will never be a buffer,
A satellite, a puppet or a pawn.

SAGITTARIUS

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to Mrs. A. W. Portal.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

My father, Charles Abbey, worked on the Albert Memorial as a sculptor, and said he carved my face among the angels on it. I was a baby at the time.

I have always wondered why people run down the beautiful Albert Memorial.—Letter in the *Daily Graphic*.

Declaring it open, Mr. Churchill said: "I earnestly hope that out of this war will come not only a just and wise settlement among the people of Europe and the world, but also that England will stand erect among nations and march ever forward along our gallant and glorious past.—Report in *Sunday Times*.

Hooking his belt to three goods wagons, weighing 19 tons, a 26-year-old crane driver at Portland naval dockyard yesterday took the belt in his teeth—and pulled the wagons 50 feet. . . . "Weight-pulling is a thing I live for," said Alex afterwards. "It is a sort of religion with me."—*Reynolds News*.

Bridal Gown and Veil, stock size, no coupons; also pr. gent's spiked running shoes.—Advt. in *Bridgwater Mercury*.

HANDICAPPED CHILDREN

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT)

THE writings of Charles Dickens and Mrs. Gaskell have made familiar the conditions of squalor and misery in which large numbers of children grew up in the early years of the nineteenth century. To those who have hitherto been tempted to regard them as stories of the past the report of the Curtis Committee on the Care of Children has come as a disquieting revelation. It reveals a confused system of administration which divides responsibility for homeless and unwanted children among a multitude of bodies; it contains evidence of slackness on the part of local authorities; and it tells of institutions in which "the general care of children was of a poor standard." To right these evils it recommends far-reaching administrative reforms which will not only concentrate the direction of policy in one Department at the centre and vitalise local administration, but also introduce that personal element which will prevent children, "who from loss of parents or from any cause whatever are deprived of a normal home life with their own parents or relatives," becoming "entries in a card index."

While recommending that the ultimate responsibility for these children should be with one Central Department which would define requirements, maintain standards, and advise and assist those taking immediate responsibility for their care, the Curtis Committee has rejected the view that the whole of the responsibilities of the State towards them ought to be discharged by a single Department. "To consign these children for all purposes to the care of a single Ministry would be to emphasise what we wish to minimise—the extent to which they are marked off from other children." They should, therefore, be subject to the health supervision of the Ministry of Health and come within the purview of the Ministry of Education in the same way as children living with their parents. If, however, they are physically or mentally handicapped, they should be treated as other children, similarly handicapped, are treated by the Ministry of Education.

The children into whose wellbeing the Curtis Committee has enquired, and on whose behalf public indignation has been aroused, may or may not belong to one of the categories which the Minister of Education has, in the Handicapped Pupils and School Health Service Regulations, 1945, specified as requiring special educational treatment. Nevertheless, it will inevitably happen that a large proportion of them—and particularly those in younger age groups—will fall into the category of educationally sub-normal children "who, by reason of limited ability or other conditions resulting in educational retardation, require some specialised form of education wholly or partly in substitution for the education normally given in ordinary schools." As it is estimated that 10 per cent. of the total school population is educationally sub-normal, it would be nothing short of disastrous if consideration of the problem of handicapped children were, at the present time, to be limited to those who from loss of parents or other causes are deprived of a normal home life.

Children classified as educationally sub-normal may be divided into two groups. First, there are those whose retardation is due to limited ability; and past experience would suggest that, in attempting to solve the special problem of the education of these children, their "intelligence" cannot be substantially improved by any methods which are at present known to us. Secondly, there are those (and these constitute a much larger group) whose retardation is due to "other causes"; and among these, as the Ministry of Education admitted recently in its pamphlet on "Special Educational Treatment," are faults of the educational system itself. They include unsatisfactory school conditions such as large classes, and bad buildings which make it difficult to give teaching suitable for each individual child. Lack of such teaching is, in the view of the Ministry, one of the prime causes of backwardness. "The lack of interest so commonly shown by the retarded child is," adds the pamphlet, "clear evidence that the teaching is unsuitable for him."

Not the least of the difficulties facing educationists is to agree on the degree of retardation that would justify special educational treatment. On this point the regulations of the Ministry are unhappily not specific, but there would seem to be a measure of agreement that special educational treatment should be given to children so retarded that their standard of work is below that achieved by average children 20 per cent. younger than themselves. Educationally sub-normal children may, therefore, be regarded as those who are retarded by more than 20 per cent. of their age, but who are neither so low graded as to be ineducable nor detrimental to others.

How these children can best be educated is, admittedly, not easily determined. The more serious cases of educational retardation requiring treatment in special schools do not probably amount to more than one or two per cent.; and the Ministry of Education has rightly insisted that these children should receive their education in boarding or day special schools. There does remain, however, the problem of how some eight or nine per cent. of retarded pupils over the age of seven are to have special educational treatment in ordinary schools, which will normally be primary and, if the tripartite division is adopted, secondary modern schools. Unhappily there is so far no unanimity of view on how schools can make the best arrangements for these children.

Arrangements for dealing with backward children have, in the past, been made on the assumption that they are few in number and that something makeshift might serve their purpose. This assumption can no longer be upheld. The Ministry of Education has, indeed, frankly admitted that the numbers of such children are probably not less than the numbers suitable for grammar school education, and that permanent and carefully considered arrangements for their education are urgently needed.

While the problem of these children is less likely to fire the popular imagination than the needs of those who are primarily classified as "deprived," it would be nothing less than a social disaster if the requirements of the latter group were considered in isolation. As the Curtis Committee has insisted in the treatment of "deprived" children, it is vitally important that all handicapped children, including those educationally retarded, should neither be entirely segregated from their fellows, nor cut off from the co-operative life of the schools. The advantages of being members of their own age groups for a considerable part of their time are as obvious as they are urgent.

PEOPLE: Heath

> "Cheerio. I don't know what licensing hours they have where I'm off to, but I'll be there at opening time. I hope the beer is better than it is here. . . . Please break your morning egg very gently for the next couple of months, because it may be me."—*Last letter of the late N. G. C. Heath.*

Sixteen young girls from a nearby paint factory cluster and chatter, anxious for the show to come off before 8.30, because they have been warned by the forewoman that she'll then come and fetch them herself—as she soon does:

"I wonder what the cheekie Charlie had for breakfast."

"He's grumbled that they've kept him short of tobacco."

"He didn't want to see *his own mother*."

But most of the dense crowd outside Pentonville this sunny morning focus on an invisible "her."

"I've heard all about her, but now I want to see what she's like herself."

"Last time she came along in a closed van. She didn't 'alf put a fast one over the police."

"They've blocked up the entrance to the prison in case she goes inside."

Sure enough, silked, portly-lady Mrs. Van Der Elst arrives, creates the usual disturbance (£2 fine). The show is completed at 9.2 a.m.—the notice goes up to announce the end of "Lt.-Col." Neville George Clevely Heath—who in his last ghastly Bournemouth days had poetically promoted himself Group Captain Rupert Brooke, D.F.C., A.F.C.; a girl of 18 reads it aloud to the crowd, repeating titbits.

* * *

Heath—like Field-Marshal Göring, who a few hours earlier that morning poisoned himself to avoid hanging, and £100,000 bankrupt "General" Corrigan, who at the same time hanged himself with his tie in Brixton to avoid a long sentence—showed in death as in life contempt for the rules of a society and civilisation which the astute, ruthless and personable can violate almost *ad nauseam.*

* * *

Heath was born (during a Zeppelin raid), of respectable parents, and left secondary school to join the Artists' Rifles. He transferred to the R.A.F. and was soon a commissioned pilot. Next year, age 19, he was dismissed for absence without leave and car theft, and lived by petty fraud, burglary and posing as Lord Dudley, until Borstalled. Released in September 1939, he enlisted as a private, and within five months was commissioned, soon a captain in the Middle East. Court-martialled again for dud cheques, he was dismissed the Army, but almost at once got a commission in the South African Air Force, becoming a pilot-instructor in record time. He was let off another court-martial for his "good record"; by now he had married a rich, upper-class girl. He was attached to the R.A.F. and flew with bombers from Britain and then over Normandy and Belgium; in the intervals living at over £5,000 a year off dud cheques and women. Dismissed with ignominy (1945), after 2,300 flying hours, he spent the balance of his life in luxury in W.1, as a Sunday paper's idea of a "Bohemian." Six editors were listed among his friends, and he wrote 30,000 words of a novel described as "competent." His associates were "a bit arty," and the late Mrs. Gardner "an artistic sort of girl, about 5 feet 3 inches in height."

* * *

His trial centred not on the crimes of double murder, which could hardly be denied, but on his mental state. Dr. W. H. Hubert, a distinguished psychiatrist and criminologist, considered Heath insane. Dr. H. T. Young, prison doctor of Wormwood Scrubs, and *not* a psychiatrist, thought him "a psychopathic personality," but sane; Dr. Grierson of Brixton (who did a 1910 course in medical psychiatry) thought Heath "a most abnormal individual," but sane. While agreeing that Heath showed no remorse or sense of guilt, Dr. Grierson considered that he was not a moral defective, since this "would have to be obvious before the age of 18."

In summing up, Mr. Justice Morris pointed out that according to law as determined by the McNaghten Rules of 1843, the jury must decide if Heath was insane or "if he knew what he was doing, did he know it was wrong. . . . It is for you to say what you think of the opinion of Dr. Hubert or whether you prefer the views of Dr. Grierson and Dr. Young." The jury found Heath guilty and sane.

* * *

Is any jury competent to decide such questions of complex scientific fact? And is not the whole definition out of date? In 103 years a new science of the mind has developed, revealing much that is new, and placing many questions *above* argument. Psychopathic conditions are well defined, and it would seem from Heath's record that he was a typical case. Like John Amery, who was manifestly psychopathic when I was at school with him, or Ronald True.

In 1922, True killed a woman under similar circumstances. He was tried before Mr. Justice McCardie, who attempted to broaden the law. On appeal, Lord Hewart sternly quashed McCardie's views, but a subsequent commission under Lord

Atkin (1924) recommended allowing for "an impulse which the prisoner was by mental disease deprived of any power to resist."

Since 1924 psychiatry has vastly enlarged its knowledge, but nothing like the Atkin recommendation (certainly applicable to Heath) has been implemented in law.

* * *

At present, there is no statutory machinery for the examination of a man's mental state, though under the Criminal Lunatics Act 1884, the Home Secretary can appoint an examining board. He is not bound to abide by their decision. And as, in the matter of reprieve, he exercises the King's Prerogative, his decision cannot be questioned in the House of Commons.

A century-old law and a royal prerogative are not enough. There should now be:

(i) A competent enquiry into the law relating to criminal insanity;
(ii) an immediate panel of recognised psychiatrists to examine doubtful cases and report fully and impartially to the Court before trial;
(iii) full opportunity for accused to engage and be examined by his own appointees.

The whole machinery of redress, both in such cases, and in military law and actions against the Crown, is archaic—and far too expensive for most people. Where the just treatment of one individual, however "worthless," is involved there should be no question of tradition, privilege, prerogative, prejudice or cost. That is what the British sort of civilisation is all about, I think.

Tom Harrisson

THE KALGAN EXPERIMENT

Kalgan, capital of the Communist Border Region, has been captured by Chiang Kai-shek's forces. The fall of this remote little city, about 250 miles north of Peiping and important as the gateway to Mongolia, means that an interesting experiment is temporarily at an end. Kalgan was the first industrialised centre in China to come into Communist hands. Before they occupied Kalgan, at the time of the Japanese surrender, their territory was entirely agrarian. More recently they have taken other industrial areas in Manchuria, but conditions there are very different.

I went to Kalgan a few months ago by train from Peiping. After four hours, so tightly packed that we could scarcely breathe, we reached Ching-Lung-Chiao, the last station before the 20-mile break in the line between Kuomintang and Communist territory. Hui Lai station, at the other end of the break in the railway line, was the usual siding. But instead of a free fight, as in Peiping, to get aboard the train, the passengers formed up into an orderly queue. It was the first queue I had ever seen in China. To have persuaded the Chinese—the most individualistic people in the world—that a queue was better than the usual mad rush, in which people often get hurt, was a remarkable tribute to the Communists.

Surprisingly, while I was waiting for the train, someone came up and spoke to me in English. He was a middle-aged man who had been a waiter at the Wagon-Lits Hotel in Peiping, but now worked on the Communist railway. We travelled together; and, with him to help interpret, the five-hour journey to Kalgan passed quickly. Everyone in the crowded luggage van—the place of honour on a train otherwise composed of open trucks—had something they wanted to tell me. They were whole-hearted supporters of the Communist regime. They all agreed—they were a mixed lot of small shopkeepers, farmers and factory workers—that they were better off under the Communists and more fairly treated than ever before. But of course nothing is perfect, and they were equally outspoken in their criticism. One young man, for instance, felt very bitterly about the way women were being encouraged to take an active part in public life.

Most of the criticisms were due to old-fashioned prejudices of this sort. I mention them because they showed what is one of the most striking features of Communist China—the absolute freedom of speech and lack of fear with which everyone speaks their mind. The train was half way to Kalgan when something struck me as curious: no one had mentioned the cost of living. That would have been impossible in Kuomintang China, where wages never catch up with the ever-soaring inflation, and the problem how to feed yourself to-morrow is the chief concern. When there was a pause in the conversation, I asked if the average worker could afford as much millet as he needed. (Millet takes the place of rice as the staple food in North China, and in Peiping the price was fantastic.) The ex-waiter and the rest of the carriage conferred together. He obviously did not quite understand what I meant. "But we don't buy millet! We're paid in millet. Everyone is." And that, as I was soon to find out, was one of the most successful experiments of the Communists. It did not mean a return to a barter system. They had their own Border Currency, but everyone's pay was reckoned, not in this money, but at the current price of millet. A professor at the Communist University in Kalgan was paid about 600 lb. of millet a month. He did not take it all away in sacks. He took the amount of grain he needed for himself and his family during the month and the rest in money. But as the price of other foodstuffs is always in relation to the staple food, he always had enough for his needs. This system was undoubtedly the reason why the people looked better fed than in the Kuomintang territory. It explained why inflation was not so bad, and why you got nearly three Kuomintang dollars for one Communist dollar.

Kalgan provided an unusually good opportunity for experiments such as this. Nine years ago it was just a sleepy country town, a dusty bowl in the centre of an arc of barren yellow hills. The Japanese transformed it. Kalgan was remote from any possible attack and they built it up as a small scale industrial stronghold. Also because of its strategic position they made it the administrative centre, although not the capital, of the Puppet Mongolian Republic. They put up modern factories, they built a big modern hospital for the 30,000 Japanese civilians they imported, and started fine schools—later turned by the Communists into a university—for Japanese children. They cleared away part of the old city, and in its place laid out wide streets and modern buildings.

The Communists inherited this legacy intact. When the surrender was announced, most of the Japanese, both soldiers and civilians, made for Peiping. The Kalgan Japanese certainly did not like the local Communists who had never ceased resistance from their mountain hideouts. With the Japanese fled most of the worst collaborators, but the majority of the propertied class remained. The landlords and small factory owners seemed to have settled down quite well under the local brand of Communism, which encouraged private enterprise and did not expropriate land, but only reduced rents to a reasonable amount.

When I was there, about half the big Japanese-built factories were working as Government concerns; preparations to open the others were being made, but they were held up by lack of raw materials. In these Government factories good wages were paid, and a profit-sharing system introduced. Many welfare measures had been brought in, such as free medical attention, sick pay, pensions for injured workers, schools for workers' children and a weekly day of rest—not general in China. The chief difficulty in Government concerns of this type, they admitted, was lack of men with managerial experience and technical knowledge. However, enthusiasm made up for a good deal. Output generally was quite reasonable and there were certain real triumphs, such as the coal mine whose output under the Japanese was only 70 tons a day, but by April this year had risen to 400 tons.

Side by side with these Government factories were many private enterprises, which the Communists encouraged by loans, but over which they had no control. These usually paid lower wages and conditions were worse. It was strange to find the head of the Border Region Trades Unions in favour of this lack of control. Over 75 per cent. of the industrial workers were members of the various Unions of which he was the enthusiastic leader, but he was all for persuading employers to improve conditions rather than compelling improvement by strikes. "Free development of private industry will help quick industrialisation," he insisted.

It sounds too idealistic even for anywhere as far out of the world as Kalgan, but this theory of persuasion rather than compulsion was what made the Kalgan experiment so interesting. The Communists were busy with various schemes for agricultural improvement. Farmers were not compelled to grow the most suitable crops, they were merely encouraged by being offered high prices. They were not made to join in co-operative irrigation schemes, or the labour exchange plan by which a farmer with no draught animals could borrow them, repaying the owner with some other form of labour; but, once they knew what it was all about, they mostly welcomed the innovation.

For the moment, the experiment is over. Chiang's American-equipped troops have put an end to speculation whether Utopia was possible in Kalgan.

Sybil Vincent

EMPLOYMENT OR PATRONAGE

At the Suffolk Galleries there is an exhibition of pictures commissioned by Imperial Chemical Industries for use in their advertising. In an introduction to the catalogue Sir Charles Tennyson, as Chairman of the Central Institute of Art and Design, welcomes the enterprise:

> It indicates that advertisement, so prosecuted, can form a most remunerative source of employment for the artist; and affords the public a fresh and extensive contact with the arts. . . . It is educating the public. It is showing both the Press and other advertisers that work of dignity, beauty and character can be more effective than the blatant and flashy.

Bravo! The example set by I.C.I. will be followed not only by other great firms but by State-run industries. Good artists are going to earn a living; the public will be saved from what is blatant and flashy. But, alas, as one goes round the exhibition some nasty queries crop up to disturb any such rosy expectations.

I.C.I. are, of course, not the first firm to use good artists for advertising. Shell, and less conspicuously the Post Office and the Underground, have preceded them; and, in my opinion, the Shell posters were on the whole considerably more interesting than what the I.C.I. in their first effort have achieved. For one thing most of the pictures at the Suffolk Galleries are portraits, and portrait-painting is a branch of art now in a specially enfeebled condition; and, to make matters more difficult, these portraits had to lend themselves readily to reproduction. But the trouble, one fears, is much more deeply rooted.

At the Suffolk Galleries the portraits by Miss Anna Zinkeisen and Mr. Eric Kennington impose themselves at once, arresting even the most apathetic eye. They are, in fact, the exhibits best suited to their purpose. They are also the exhibits that I find most distasteful. Nor is this an accident. A less expressive work could not make a comparable impact upon me: it takes great skill to make things so blatant and flashy. Are the I.C.I. then to be blamed for commissioning such objects? One supposes not. Probably a poll would show them to be the most popular works in the show. If I wanted a tune that would be whistled in every street, I should apply to Mr. Irving Berlin and not to Alban Berg, William Walton or Michael Tippett.

I do not suggest that commercial art and fine art are always and necessarily separated by an abyss. Bérard's advertisements for scent are often delicious; the popularity of Van Gogh's Sunflowers in reproductions show that they would have made a smash hit as a poster. In the I.C.I. exhibition Miss Evelyn Dunbar, Mr. Wadsworth and Mr. Armstrong show work that is commendable both as fine art and as commercial art (though not superlatively good as either). I.C.I. are to be congratulated on employing such painters, and one hopes that they will persevere and discover others of at least equal merit. But let us not imagine that commercial art can offer a means of livelihood to most good artists.

Mr. Pritchett in the current *Contact* suggests that great firms like I.C.I. should become patrons of literature. No individual in the country is as rich as they; and, enjoying the economic supremacy of Eighteenth Century Dukes, they are in a position to exercise the enlightened patronage that Dukes used to offer. An admirable notion; and one wishes also that they would become patrons of painting. But employment is not the same as patronage.

A Duke was usually content with a fulsome dedication: he did not expect the poet to spend his time writing paeans on ducal measures, ducal virtues or ducal properties. Is it impossible that great firms like I.C.I. should follow this example, and buy pictures by our best living artists for presentation to museums? This would be patronage as opposed to employment. The name of the donor would appear on the frame, corresponding to the old poet's dedication. Such a policy would, I believe, be good advertising as well as beneficial to artist and public.

Finally, someone may urge that these considerations are almost out of date, since State ownership is rapidly replacing capitalism. The answer is that this process does not abolish the uses of advertisement. Though the Post Office is a State monopoly, it requires a number of posters. And if the State refuses to recognise the distinction between employment and patronage, the painter (and the writer) will find their situation intolerable.

Roger Marvell

P.S.—I must recommend all lovers of good pictures to go to Tooth's. The newly discovered Constable, though most unexpected in its lay-out, is characteristic in its beautiful handling; and most 19th-century painters sometimes break away from their habits. The Crome, the Corot, the Pissarros, the Monet and the small Bonnard are all remarkable. With other good things at the Leicester Galleries is a series of designs made by Mr. John Piper for Britten's *Rape of Lucretia*. Those who heard this beautiful opera know how brilliantly Mr. Piper's decor compensated for the sillinesses and solecisms of the libretto. His sense of the theatre is outstanding, and one hopes that he will spare the time for giving us many similar treats.

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Much Ado About Nothing," at the Aldwych

This play first showed me the difference between Shakespeare read at school with notes and Shakespeare on the stage. Nothing could be more romantic, it seemed, than Ainley or funnier than Balliol Holloway, with the cawing voice and the credulous face. Then came Edith Evans's Beatrice, at the Old Vic., to sweep every other production into the background. This new revival, too, should have been overwhelming. Robert Donat has all the qualities for the part of Benedick. He has chosen a strong cast, each of them separately excellent. A Claudio and Don Pedro (Mr. Troughton and Mr. Hewitt) who can offset the brutality of their roles by a native gentleness; a sweet Hero; and was there ever a specialist in Shakespearean acting who could carry his learning so lightly as Harcourt Williams? Miss Asherson, the Beatrice, though she is young enough to need the most circumspect direction, cannot be for an instant dull. John Armstrong was called in to design the scenery and costumes. Yet the whole play seemed to congeal slowly before our eyes; the actors, like the courtiers in the Palace of the Sleeping Beauty, passed into a state of suspended animation. It was as if, by magic, all the magic had gone.

What had gone wrong? If he is to dominate the stage, Benedick must appear, in the fiction of the play, naive enough to be dominated by Beatrice. It is natural to Benedick, and to Mr. Donat, to be generously tender and warmly human. He has chosen, for this part, to adopt a forced and quizzical voice, partially hiding its natural tones. Miss Asherson, instead of riding the tide of renaissance wit, half founders beneath it, charmingly yet pathetically. Yet both have their natural interludes. The paralysis may be due to the tempo of the production, which is too slow, but this in turn is due to the plethora of business, and the hammering home of points of detail. Beatrice spoils her lovely "taming my wild heart" passage by making two separate gestures for the line "Contempt farewell! and maiden pride, adieu!" in the line before it. In spite of all the atttractions of the case, it was all rather like doing Shakespeare with notes over again.

Stephen Potter

RADIO NOTES

Hiroshima. We should applaud the sense of responsibility which must have induced the B.B.C. to broadcast in full John Hersey's terrible account of this holocaust. Mopping our foreheads, we accept the indictment; pausing to wonder only whether the warning touched any of the right people. But why adopt the distracting method of distributing the narrative among several voices? Apart from the possible fatigue of one reader, there was no excuse for this in the text: the division was quite arbitrary and corresponded to no dramatic feature of the narrative. It is always better, in cases like this, to keep to one reader, if necessary shortening the period.

While the musical broadcasts of the Third Programme have my unstinted admiration, I feel that, in the case of plays, features and so on, a sharper look-out might be kept for shabby radio conventions and methods that have become blunted by use. Multiple narration is one of these; another is the perfunctory "period" appurtenances of the historic feature. That harpsichord, for instance, which was called in to set the atmosphere for Miss Wedgwood's *Imaginary Conversation* between John Evelyn and Prince Rupert. This acute and well-written script was the first of what I hope will be a long and delightful series; but I entreat the editor of it to insist upon a *plainer* approach. The focus should be exclusively upon the conversation. By all means let the characters refer to their surroundings (Landor's occasionally do this), but do not distract the listener in any way from what is actually said. If these programmes are allowed to turn into rudimentary plays, they will lose their point—literary, philosophic or whatever.

The essence of intelligent enjoyment being, I take it, to extend one's range of response to remote connections, I suggest that listeners meditate upon the features common to Mr. Sam Hawkins's account of what it is like to be a Sewer Rat, and Miss Theodora Bosanquet's sketch of "Henry James at Work." Both these talks were perfect in their kind—admirably delivered and as packed with interest as a sardine tin with meat. Suggestions for future broadcasts on the Hawkins model: a rat-catcher, a steeple-jack, a lavatory attendant, an anæsthetist, a dental surgeon, a sweep, a telephone-operator, the keeper of a pin-table saloon, a specialist in heraldry, ditto in falconry, a philatelist, an exiled royalty (strictly personal), a professional exorcist.

Personal Points. In spite of the non-appearance of Arthur Marshall, who was billed to (but did not) let out a single squeak, this sophisticated revue had enough good things in it to make one hope that it has come to stay. I particularly enjoyed the series of skits on radio critics, in which I myself was let down far more lightly than I had any right to expect—from Variety. And being given the best of the tunes, I consider that I ran away with the show. In deference to Mr. Yates-Mason, I forbear to include my customary quotation from Tasso this week, but merely suggest that, brevity being the soul of wit, some of the items in this revue were a bit top-heavy. Probably forty-five minutes is fifteen too long for this kind of programme.

Outstanding musical performances in the past three weeks: Philip Levi in Busoni, Frederick Fuller in Hugo Wolf. The first is quite evidently a pianist in a thousand: behind his faultlessly intellectual performance one felt great reserves of power and sensibility. Mr. Fuller's rendering of Wolf was musicianly in the extreme. He possesses a voice of the most agreeable quality, and his style is the perfection of intimacy. I wish the Third Programme would invite him to repeat the broadcast of South American songs he gave in the Home Service some months ago; it was a treat.

Edward Sackville West

THE MOVIES

"Le Grand Jeu," at the Academy
"Le Bois Sacré," at Studio One

"Side-tracked" is the word used in the publicity sheets to explain why Jacques Feyder's *Le Grand Jeu*, made in 1934, did not arrive in London till last week. Twelve years, perhaps, is a long time, but does not side-tracking of one sort and another interfere with the passage of every French film to this country? More than eighteen months ago a group of French films, made during the Occupation, was shown to the press in Oxford Street: eighteen months or so later, one of these, Cocteau's *L'Eternel Retour*, was given a run; the others remain unheard of. By the time the public is finally allowed to see *Goupi Mains Rouges* it will be at least five years old. And this week's "new" film at Studio One proudly bears the date 1940. Now, in the case of a poem or a painting or a symphony the time-lapse might not be damaging; but films by their very nature are denied perpetuity. Their impact is or should be immediate: refuse them that, and not only does entertainment suffer, but the most instantaneous of the arts loses its particular appeal. I am especially concerned at the moment with Rouquier's *Farrebique, ou les Quatre Saisons*, the documentary which was given a couple of performances at the Scala last month. It is, to-day, as vivid an experience as can be had in the world of cinema: an extension of realism that must make almost any other film look second-hand and lifeless. Now, and not ten years hence, is the moment to encounter this experience. But will the public be given the chance? We shall see; or rather, I suspect, we san't.

One is almost tempted to write about *Le Grand Jeu* in the past. It was—no, it *is*—compelling, this realistic piece about the Foreign Legion, but one detects its quality as in a bad version of Dostoevsky. The serious adulation, for example, with which a big affair between rich unattractive lovers is elaborated—that's a bore, reeking of stale perfumes. But then the man, after misappropriating funds, joins the Foreign Legion, and the film—though still dogged by flatness—comes into its own. Remarkable indeed is the atmosphere of Morocco, of brothels and *casernes*, of hot nights, whining bugles, and shifty acquaintanceships. The picture of sex—in a medium that has harboured the most grotesque illusions—startles by its unappetising harshness, and the second of the hero's affairs, in which he deludes himself into falling in love with a tart who resembles his mistress, is developed with a realism seldom achieved on the screen. Mlle Marie Bell suggests the lymphatic charms of this simple soul with looks and gestures atrociously right. And in the more likeable part of an elderly café madam, Françoise Rosay (less generally known in 1934) achieves by her personality a monumental figure. Her and M. Feyder's next film was of a very different order: *La Kermesse Hèroïque*, as roseate and appetising as the other is antiseptic. Apart from its age, which shows like the dust settled on everlastings in a glass case, *Le Grand Jeu* lacks the final conviction of a work of art. The hero (Pierre Richard-Willm) is never quite real, and there are streaks of sentimentality where they can be ill-afforded. However, even at this date, *La Grand Jeu* is a film that ought not on any account to be missed.

The sacred wood at Studio One, though not Mr. Eliot's, introduces the Nine Muses in a comedy of love and wire-pulling. There are some delirious moments at the Ministère des Beaux-Arts in this attempt of a poetess to win for herself the Légion d'Honneur; and a cast including Gaby Morlay, Dalio, and Elvire Popesco transmits the fun of a brilliant stage comedy. The whole piece, half-adapted to the screen, mingles amusement and tedium, wit and cliché. Perhaps it just gets past by a touch of inventive gaiety which a better-made American farce on the same lines would lack. No director's name is given in the programme, and the authors, MM. Flers and Caillavet, enjoyed a more skilful transcription with their *Le Roi s'Amuse.*

William Whitebait

Correspondence

ARCHBISHOP STEPINEC

Sir,—As I recently had an opportunity of visiting Archbishop Stepinec in Zagreb, I have followed the reports on his trial with great interest.

Eighteen months ago, while serving as a British Liaison Officer in Yugoslavia, I read in the German-controlled press and heard over the Zagreb radio the call of Archbishop Stepinec to his people to rally to the crumbling Croat State and resist the Allied armies which were advancing towards final victory. A few weeks later, Zagreb was freed, Pavelitch had fled and the archbishop remained.

Back in Zagreb a year later, I was surprised, in view of the many changes which had taken place in Yugoslavia, to find that Mgr. Stepinec was still Primate of Croatia. I called on him in his palace and he talked with me alone for over an hour. He told me frankly that he and those of his priests who had collaborated with the Germans had done so because the issue in the war had been a clear one, between Fascism and Communism; he had chosen the former while Britain had chosen the latter. He regretted the horrors of the Nazi occupation, but he preferred them to the present Federal regime, first, because this had, in his view, been imposed on Croatia by the Serbs, and, secondly, because while the Germans and Ustachi had burned down his churches and killed his congregations, the Communists, by their educational and land reforms were threatening the hold of the Church over its schools and estates. He assured me that, though many might now be infatuated with the new regime, the peasants would one day rise, and he looked to the West to use its atomic power to impose Western civilisation on Moscow and Belgrade before it was too late.

As I passed through the shadowed cloisters into the cathedral square I wondered how long His Grace would retain the spiritual leadership of the Church of Croatia.

British Liaison Officer

INCENTIVES

Sir,—I am sorry to see "Critic" lending the support of his influential and usually authoritative pen to the mistaken idea that there is at present a surplus of purchasing power amongst the working classes. He asks "What incentive have British women to return to work in the factories if there is so little to buy with the wages they would earn?" I don't think there is a working woman in the country who suffers nearly so much from empty shelves in the shops as from an empty purse, and who would have the slightest difficulty in spending twice as much as she earns. There are still far too many of our people struggling to make ends meet, and very many more who, whilst they can cover their necessities, are unable to buy all the marginal things which they see in the shops and which they would like to buy.

"Critic's" proposition was probably true twelve or even six months ago for a small proportion of workers in some parts of the country, but in the last few months shops shelves have filled much faster than pay-packets. The increase which "Critic" mentions in betting (which is anyhow very tiny when measured against the national payroll) is due to a number of quite different causes, and very little of it involves working-class money.

This legend that shortage of consumer goods is the most important current determinant of workers' productivity has been put about by unprogressive managements as an excuse for their failure to study and understand the problem of workers' incentives. Some of these managements look upon their task as that of making their people work harder even if they don't want to, and have never given a moment's thought to the problem of making their workers *want* to work harder. It is this that is the core of the problem, and not sweeping generalisations which can be disproved by spending an hour any morning with a working-class housewife on a shopping expedition.

House of Commons Ian Mikardo

["Critic" writes: "Everything is relative: my contention is that there is still a real shortage of uncouponed goods within reach of the working-class purse. There is little incentive to make the extra five or ten shillings."—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

NUREMBERG RALLY

Sir,—While agreeing with the greater part of "Critic's" paragraph last week on the Nuremberg trials and executions, I feel I must break a lance on behalf of my Fleet Street colleagues when he criticises the newspapers' handling of these events.

"Critic" asked, "why make a sensation of Göring's suicide?" But surely it *was* a sensational piece of news? Only those mentally deaf and dumb can have failed to find it interesting, significant and shocking. I wonder, had "Critic" been editor of an evening paper on the day the report broke, whether he would have found it possible to treat it as anything but first-class front-page news?

Secondly, he refers to "the loathsome reporting of the executions." It would, I am ready to agree, have been better to have forbidden any reports of the executions at all. But, in my judgment, those who were given the assignment of reporting the event did their horrible job with restraint. The *event* was loathsome, and therefore any reporting of it, however objective, was bound to fill all sensitive people with loathing. The prime fault lay, I submit, with those in authority who allowed what should have been a private and anonymous execution to be turned into the equivalent of a public spectacle—and incidentally afforded the criminals an opportunity to utter their Nazi testimony from the scaffold. Thus, what should have been an ignominious exit became a final (?) Nuremberg rally. Gerald Barry

["Critic" writes: "My objections were precisely the same as Mr. Barry's. I am far from blaming individual reporters who, working for a commercialised Press, did their job very efficiently."—Ed., *N.S. & N.*]

OCCUPATION OF JAPAN

Sir,—I was most interested to read H. V. Hancock's criticisms of my letter and I agree with him that much of B.C.O.F. policy is not self-initiated. The second horseman seldom sees the fox. His remark that "with rare exceptions our national press appears to have nothing to tell us," is also most welcome. It is a major grievance of all ranks in this area that we are "the Legion of the Lost." The recent visit of five M.P.s to the B.C.O.F. area gave United Kingdom personnel here a chance to voice their dissatisfaction. The only previous occasion on which a really representative account of British and Dominion opinion was printed was that of an article by a *Daily Mail* correspondent some two months ago, reprinted in the *Auckland Star*.

Many members of the Commonwealth Occupation Force are asking just what purpose we serve by being in Japan. The official answer, I imagine, is that we are here to show the flag; but what sort of a flag is it and are we in fact showing it? If we are here to show the Japanese that the United States did not win the war unaided, how are they likely to be convinced of this by the poor quality of our equipment and our poor living conditions? Of course, in saying that our living conditions are poor, I am referring not to United Kingdom standards but to those enjoyed by our neighbours, the Americans, with whom we have to suffer comparison.

Again, a glance at the map is sufficient for one to realise how few centres of population there are in the B.C.O.F. area. The only place of any size was sacrificed to the mighty atom, and is now a stretch of waste ground with a mushroom growth of wooden cabins. It would have been fairer, and more logical,

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to have included in the B.C.O.F. area Kobe, formerly the main centre of British influence, together with Osaka and perhaps Kyoto. Why for that matter could we not have occupied the Southern island, Kyushu or, better still, all Japan south of Osaka, so giving us the southern half of Japan? Further, the administration of the area should have been placed in B.C.O.F. hands. The area that we in fact occupy at present is almost entirely agricultural, populated by simple peasant people of a not very impressive standard of living. It is very difficult to connect these people with the victors of the Philippines and the South-West Pacific.

Then, to compensate for our unfortunate position here how effective is our propaganda and what are its objectives? I have only once managed to visit a Japanese cinema. The newsreel portrayed the military strength of the U.S.A. It showed formation flying by United States aircraft and an impressive ceremonial march-past. The rest of the film was taken up with shots of the United States armed forces assisting with civil relief work. Apart from a minute or so of Mr. Churchill being welcomed to the United States there was no mention of the other Allies. Of course, I have quoted an isolated instance, and one that may not be typical of American films. But do we send our newsreels to Japan? If not, why not? Or has General MacArthur refused us permission to show them?

Then what cultural contacts have we with the Japanese? As a matter of fact, I do know of two that have slipped by the non-fraternisation order. One is a service connection with a Japanese cultural society whereby the Japanese receive, and sometimes give, lectures on political, educational and other topics. The other is mainly a question of allowing a qualified schoolmaster in the Services to teach in the Japanese schools in the town in which he is stationed; but here again, I believe that his case is entirely unofficial and is not sponsored by H.Q., B.C.O.F. These two "contacts" do not affect more than the merest handful of Japanese. Apparently, British democracy and other features of British life that would be of interest to the Japanese are to be concealed from them. I am not sure whether this complete neglect of making cultural and educational contacts with the Japanese is in accordance with a definite policy or springs from sheer lack of interest. On either count it is highly reprehensible and may prejudice our future political and commercial relations with the country.

At any rate, the mass of the townsmen in the B.C.O.F. area must be aware of the features in the American area that bid fair to win the latter complete commercial as well as political control. The aloof isolationist policy of the B.C.O.F. area gives place, in the American Zone, to a policy of fraternisation. It is round the dinner table that business is often transacted in Japan just as in the West. Most significant of all, however, is the attitude of "King" MacArthur himself. I should like to mention in passing that a number of young Japanese with whom I have talked make something of a demi-god of him. It will be interesting to see whether the "MacArthur Shogunate" figures in the Japanese history books of the future, especially if the new Shogun's attitude corresponds to that assigned to him in the *Economist* of September the 7th:—

"The Japanese official statement on the Bill" [connected with agrarian reform] "showed great pleasure in condemning the British proposals from under the Supreme Commander's protecting wing. The Council has indeed become an object for mirth in Japan, as it is known that the Supreme Commander regards both the Russian and British representatives as dangerous "Reds," and is firmly resolved to save Japan from their pernicious influence."

Many of us find it difficult to understand why a position of ludicrous inferiority in the backyard of Japan was ever accepted. It is significant that the Russians are not in Japan. Presumably they realised that there is not room for two Cinderellas in such a small area. I know of nowhere else in the world where we cut such a sorry figure.

If our military commitments are to be scaled down to correspond with the meagre response to recruitment for the armed forces and to reduce the penalties imposed on youth by a long period of conscripted service, it would be no sacrifice to withdraw our occupation force from Japan. In short, our occupation of part of Japan has had the opposite effect to what was intended. So far from enhancing our prestige in Japanese eyes it has made a laughing stock of us. It would have been better if we had remained an unknown quantity on the other side of the globe.

Japan OCCUPATION FORCES OFFICER

COURTS MARTIAL

SIR,—Your correspondent on the above subject in your issue of October 19th is right when he says that there should be a right of appeal from Courts Martial to a court composed of those competent to deal with appeals. But after some four years' experience overseas as defending officer, prosecuting officer and Judge Advocate, I am convinced that merely to grant a right of appeal would cure only a few of the injustices inherent in the system, fundamental as those injustices undoubtedly are. It is impossible here to go into all the injustices; two are of outstanding importance.

In the first place the procedure is neither exemplary nor speedy. The case of an officer alleged to have committed perjury in November, put under arrest at the end of December, but only brought to trial until April, is only one of many within my own knowledge. Neither is the actual trial so fair as it is so often said to be. With the best will in the world an inexperienced court, advised by a Judge Advocate with little or no experience of the practice of criminal law, cannot always be fair. I could give many instances of such courts.

Your correspondent's suggestion that "courts martial should certainly be composed of experienced criminal lawyers" is a counsel of perfection. He says that there "could be no difficulty in finding the necessary experts from a profession already overcrowded." But where are all those experienced Judge Advocates and members of the J.A.G.'s staff who could not be induced to stop on in the Army or the R.A.F. when the war was over? A Major's pay, even at "legal rates" (but with no "prospects") is not much of an inducement for anyone likely to do well at the Bar.

What is needed is the abolition of Courts Martial as we know them now, and the substitution of a system of travelling civilian lawyers of the calibre and salary, and fulfilling much the same functions, as stipendiary magistrates. They would deal summarily with most offences (including some now dealt with by commanding officers, perhaps by election of the accused) and commit the graver cases to a more formal but similar type of court. There would be a right of appeal to a court composed of senior lawyers with a final appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal. For cases involving purely military affairs, military assessors could sit.

Thus would be abolished most of the paraphernalia of summaries of evidence with the delays and injustices involved and thus would soldiers and airmen be placed as nearly as possible in the same position for trial as their civilian brothers.

"TEMPORARY J. A."

CRITICISM OF FILMS

Sir,—Miss Arnot Robertson is not alone in incurring the displeasure of Messrs. Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Ltd. I have been a film-journalist and film-critic for 23 years, and my comments on films have appeared in British, American, Empire and French publications.

But I have for some years been barred from the Press screenings of Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Ltd.

Is it supportable that a film company should in effect demand the right to approve or reject an editor's choice of his film-reviewer?

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BOOKS IN GENERAL

This attempt at an appreciation of Sir Max Beerbohm's new book* and his general achievement in critical and creative literature, not forgetting his portraits of his contemporaries (which might perhaps not too fancifully be described as his writings on the wall) is made by one who from sheer old age finds some difficulty in using the current idiom. His own youth disported itself on that sort of bicycle known to the heroes of antiquity *sub regno bonae Victoriae*, as ordinary, but now housed among primeval monstrosities at the museum; yet he would have you to know that he understands or thinks he understands—as he most certainly admires—and has more in common with the young people of to-day than with his own contemporaries, save a very few such as the subject of this article. Max will remain for him ever the bright young thing he was in 1892, even though he affects to disdain the callow brilliant of 1946. This attitude might be deemed ungenerous could it be taken seriously. But it cannot.

Sir Max poses as a cynic with no good word that is not ironical to speak of his immediate environment: actually he is a sentimentalist saved by his gay sobriety from falling into the sink-a-pace of the more lachrymose passages in Sterne. Max writes like a man who has quaffed a glass of dry champagne: Sterne as though doped by port left too long in the rum cask. About Max's tawniest creation there is no flavour of molasses. On the other hand, if Max might have conceived Uncle Toby in his brain, one may doubt whether his nib could have been so broadened as to make the full body viable upon paper.

But let us look into the present book, the most recent particle of which—*On Playgoing*—was issued to the world in the form of a broadcast last year, and consider how in carriage and philosophy it differs from the luminous matter which burst upon the Victorians as *The Works of Max Beerbohm* just fifty years since. That historic volume came out in the company of Barrie's *Sentimental Tommy*, Crockett's *Cleg Kelly*, H. G. Wells's *Wheels Of Chance*, and Mrs. Humphrey Ward's *Sir George Tressady*, yet is not like any of these. Nor, so far as one short-sighted critic dare judge, is *Mainly on the Air* very like any other publication so far apparent in this year of grace. There have been writers who could lisp in Maxian numbers, but he has survived them. It is but piety to say there is no Max but Max and he has been always his own prophet. In what may have appeared to be paradox he has been consistent. If he condemned the up-to-datedness of the end of the nineteenth century, so does he condemn the same evil to-day. Whatever is is wrong, and what will be must be as bad or worse. The bad of fifty years ago, being no longer present or to come, is good to think upon. Who can pick a hole in this?

Mainly on the Air, as its name suggests, is made up of half a dozen little sermons originally borne by the winds in their circuits to the homes of the moderately high brows. It were vain to pretend that Max's vocabulary could pierce the armour plate of the unlettered. The voice is the voice of simplicity, but the saying can be uncommonly hard; and a syllable missed is a sentence lost for ever. Desmond MacCarthy (than whom there is no better judge on his own exalted plane of thought) expressed a preference for hearing these discourses rather than seeing them in print; but in a slower mind the seen and re-read word settles deeper: the aesthetic pleasure of listening to an agreeable voice must not be confused with the intellectual pleasure of following the ratiocination albeit of an unacceptable argument. Not all listeners can take such fences quickly: if a term in the syllogism be lost, thought comes a cropper.

The first of these broadcasts, already eleven years old but repeated a few days since in the new Third Programme, treats of London revisited in 1935 after an absence of many years broken only by rare flying calls. We are told that the speaker is a Cockney by birth who remained in London to earn his living until 1910; when, being then married and in his thirty-seventh year, freedom dawned in the east and he flew to the Italian coast of the Mediterranean; where that blue water sustained his happiness better than the Serpentine or Round Pond more familiar to his youth. It is not however to the London of Edwardian days his mind goes back so much as to the last decades of Victoria. He imagines them to have been comparatively gay, and in a gentlemanly top-hatted manner, he cannot find anywhere to-day, or in that yesterday culminating in the dissection of the atom for military purposes.

> London is a Cathedral town. And in my day—in the 'eighties of my boyhood and the 'nineties of my youth—London, with all her faults, seemed not wholly unlike a Cathedral town, I do assure you . . . Hampstead, upon its hill, was a little old remote village; and so was Chelsea, down yonder by the river. Mayfair and Westminster and St. James's were grand, of course, very urban, in a proudly unostentatious way.

Needless to say, this was the London not of fact on any day in the Eighties or Nineties, but in the halcyon holidays of once upon a time. Hampstead may have been for the well-to-do a more agreeable place than it is now, but Chelsea, with its abominable stews, among the most insanitary in the Metropolis, was very much worse off in every way in the fiftieth year of Victoria than in the twenty fifth of George the Fifth . . . Sir Max paints with the playful grace of Watteau what needs the ferocious crudity of Hogarth and Rowlandson . . . They could, no doubt, find subjects in Chelsea today, but one may walk from Sloane Square to World's End, without necessarily encountering them . . . Not so in 1891, when a searchlight first illumined these streets and alleys from the Naval Exhibition in the grounds of Chelsea Hospital.

Sir Max is nearer the truth, as most of us see it, when he attacks far the greatest scandal of modern England: the insane handling of mechanical motive power upon the roads, and the almost incredible twist in the conscience and sense of honour that seems to befall the ordinarily honest man once he lays his hand on his own steering wheel and his foot on his own levers. Men are to-day more ferociously intoxicated with motion than they were with gin and Parliament Brandy, when they were hawked through the streets to encourage home industry in the brave days of Robert Walpole, so admired by Whig historians.

On the subject of Speed, Sir Max Beerbohm, in a broadcast on a Sunday evening in April 1936, let himself be heard with no uncertain voice. Opening with a quotation from Henley's preposterous poem about speed as a rapturous example of God's "reasoned benevolence," Max drily added: "These words, ladies and gentlemen, are not mine" and went on to explain:

> Henley had not any religion of an ecclesiastical kind. But he was nevertheless a deeply religious man. He had made a god of Literature. He had made a god of the British Empire. He had made a god also of the Tory Party. And here was a new god for him—Speed

Max reduces such Blitz-worship to absurdity:

> Mental speed is a thing which, like speed of limb, has always commanded admiration. We are glad that Lope de Vega wrote fifteen hundred plays. We wish our Shakespeare had done likewise but console ourselves by the report that "he never blotted a line." It gratifies us that Father Newman wrote his lovely *Apologia* in eight weeks, and Samuel Johnson his fine *Rasselas* in the evenings of one week. We should be inspirited by any evidence that Edward Gibbon wrote the *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in six months, or that Christopher Wren designed St. Paul's Cathedral in twenty-five minutes . . . We are ashamed that our thoughts form themselves no more swiftly than in the old restful days.

We may well question whether these old restful days ever existed—where were they for example in Christian Byzantium under Justinian the Law-giver? Surely tranquillity should have reigned there and not the bloody faction fighting of the rival charioteers. Yet indeed it is a phenomenon perhaps peculiar to our time that the acquisition of a Baby Austin should turn Mr. Smith, our affable greengrocer, into Juggernaut Smith, the road-hog.

Those who associate Max's name mainly with the Stage and the years of his dramatic criticism in the *Saturday Review*, will turn first to the dissertations on *Music Halls of My Youth*, of January, 1942 and *Playgoing* of October, 1945. In the one they will read of the Great MacDermott, the true original singer of "We don't want to Fight but by Jingo etc.," of Disraelian "Peace With Honour" days, still threatening Russia (though a different Autocrat, Disraeli's having been blown to pieces by his own good people) with the displeasure of the Music Halls.

> Here he was in the flesh, in the grease-paint, surviving and thriving, to my delight; a huge old burly fellow, with a yellow wig and a vast expanse of crumpled shirt-front that had in the middle of it a very large, not *very* real diamond stud. And he was still belligerent, wagging a great imperative forefinger at us across the footlights, and roaring in a voice slightly husky but still immensely powerful a song with the refrain "That's What We'd Like To Do—" . . .
>
> "To join those aspirants
> Who'd crush Russian tyrants——
> *That's* what we'd like to do:"

But the artist who consistently represented Mr Rudyard Kipling, whether assisting at an academic ritual or sporting with Britannia on Hampstead Heath, as holding a stunted mind in the body of a stunted bagman, never followed the drum of General Jingo. Quite early in life Max's fancy deserted the scarlet finery of the Guards for the sober vestments of the Constabulary. Better than the martial music of MacDermott or Charles Godfrey's personal victory at Inkerman, he listened to the Frenchified Cockney sentiment of Albert Chevalier with its whiff of daisies in our town, and the manly pessimism of Gus Elen, summed up for ever in the question and answer—

"Wot's the good of Ennyfink? . . .
Why Nuffink!"

Of his opinion of the present-day theatre, it is perhaps safe to say that Sir Max Beerbohm is right from his own point of view, if none other. Briefly, he likes the theatre to be like nothing else on land or sea . . . at least he says he does.

Of the non-broadcast part of the book, the most important items are a comparatively serious essay in aesthetics, called *Fenestralia*, and another picture for that portrait gallery containing the all too mortally immortal Soames. Of the 132 pages in this volume fourteen are given to the portrayal of "T. Fenning Dodworth." It is as if Frans Hals had delineated some anonymous burgomaster who had vexed him: painting him in such a way that the subject would scarcely suspect the effigy of being himself, though, recognising it as true to life not quite his own. It is an idealised picture of masterly nothingness and oracular nescience. Sharp as is the definition, the colours are so soberly laid on that, if it did not appear in such witty company, perhaps many would take it for an earnest study of a major nonentity of yesterday. There is such a thing as writing too well: that is to say, for the common reader, who would rather obfuscate himself with beer than read anything uncommon. If you are a stupid fellow you had better avoid this latest example of one of our masters of humorous prose. To conclude, Sir Max may well say with Ernest Renan "Je n'ai jamais cherché le succès; je dirai presque qu'il m'ennuie", but he cannot quite candidly add "Le plaisir de vivre et de produire me suffit;" for though he has quietly enjoyed the more gracious side of life—on occasion disgraced by a lapse into "practical joking"—he never enjoyed producing anything, unless he took pen or pencil, or both at once, to amuse himself and his friends.

Conal O'Riordan

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* *Mainly on the Air. Heinemann.* 8*s*. 6*d*.

STALINGRAD

The Year of Stalingrad. By A. WERTH. *Hamish Hamilton.* 8s. 6d.

In *The Year of Stalingrad*, Mr. Alexander Werth has written the book that his friends hoped to see from him. Born and brought up in Leningrad, he came to Britain as a youth and understands equally well the country of his birth and the country of his adoption. Mr. Werth, who can pass as a Russian, saw the inside of many Russian homes and acquired an outstanding knowledge of all sides of Russian life during the war years. In describing the battle of Stalingrad he has had access to much important material not normally accessible to foreigners nor indeed to most Soviet citizens. He kept a diary and noted down every interesting conversation and what was significant in the Soviet Press. All of this makes first-class material.

The book is long and the type is small, but the interest never flags. Is it too much to hope for a second edition with illustrations and larger type? Mr. Werth's style is very readable and he has made a judicious mosaic from his memories, from his vivid diary and from the Soviet Press and Soviet war-time literature. The book is packed with thumbnail portrait sketches and with living pictures of an unfamiliar way of life. Every reader will find something new to him.

The year 1942 was a turning point not only in the war, but also in the life of the Russian people. Since Peter the Great two worlds have existed side by side in smouldering and sometimes flaming enmity. The conflict between Peter's new and half European world of the upper classes and the medieval world of the unprivileged merged in the class struggle of the revolutionary period. But by 1941 the Soviet system was at last firmly established and the fires of the "Great Patriotic War" fused the nation into a unity closer than at any time since the middle of the 17th century. National unity not class struggle was the dominant theme of the war years. This is the true political meaning of the change in relations between Church and State.

Mr. Werth writes with warm sympathy but with balance. He has not sacrificed any of his Western standards upon the altar of Russophile emotion. The squalor of everyday life is faithfully portrayed, as are also the disgraceful scenes, which marked the German advance on Moscow in October, 1941. Mr. Werth's description of the shocking Soviet collapse on the lower Don, which opened the way to Stalingrad, and of the counter-measures taken to reform the army is extremely interesting and will be new to all but the handful of those who follow Soviet Affairs with close attention. At such a moment, it was a brave thing to put the former "political Commissars" under the command of regular officers. Indeed, after a week's immersion in the atmosphere of Stalingrad I do not know whether to admire more the heroism of the greater part of the Soviet peoples or the nerve and courage of Generalissimo Stalin, and his associates, who navigated their clumsy bark so skilfully through the rapids.

One of the most valuable parts of the book is the account of Soviet propaganda policy. The reader will now see for himself the process by which literature and the arts are put to the service of the community. This may make it easier to understand some of the twists and turns in Soviet literary criticism, and in the policy of Soviet publishing houses. It is none the less sad to record that the latest turn of the wheel condemns the work of certain eminent writers, whom Mr. Werth is able to praise for the patriotic part they played during the war, as well as for other qualities, which in the long run place their reputations beyond the chances of politics. In 1942 loyalty and patriotism were enough to secure a hearing, but in 1946 the party requires from writers a positive and all-absorbing devotion to the task of furthering by propaganda the next immediate objective of the Soviet Government.

Great Russian patriotism and devotion to the Soviet State can be seen as different aspects of the same idea, but Mr. W. shows how first one facet and then another is given emphasis as tactical needs change. The book is not primarily concerned with Anglo-Soviet relations and this is an advantage in writing the history of Second Front propaganda. Mr. Werth places this propaganda in proper proportion upon the gigantic canvas of the war.

The author's access to Soviet sources enables him to cast a flood of light on the battle of Stalingrad. The heroism of the Russian troops, and, it must be admitted, of their adversaries is no new story, but it gains freshness in its latest narration. The Russian losses were cruel, but it is now clear that in the main the battle was not won by greater manpower and stoical indifference to casualties. The Russian armies enjoyed a relatively small superiority in numbers; indeed, the popular picture of endless millions standing behind the Kremlin is greatly exaggerated. The white population of the U.S.A. and the British Empire is no less than the total population of the Soviet Union.

At Stalingrad tactics and bravery were about equal on the two sides, but the Soviet forces won through better strategy and steadier nerves in the Supreme Command.

One is often tempted to think that the Soviet Government might well trust its own people more than it does, but after reading Mr. Werth this criticism is abated. To place such a fearful strain on the defenders of Stalingrad, while massing forces for a break-through on a wider front, required not only the highest generalship, but also complete mutual trust between Stalin, his generals and the rank and file.

JOHN LAWRENCE.

GEOLOGY FOR BEGINNERS

Britain's Structure and Scenery. By L. DUDLEY STAMP. *Collins.* 16s.

Having read much praise of Mr. Ford's book on butterflies and Mr. Fitter's on London's natural history, I thought I would read the latest volume to appear in the same "New Naturalist" series, the aim of which is to interest "the general reader." My schooling did not include a single lesson in geology, and since then I have read precious little on the subject except accounts of the glaciations in books on pre-historic man. I am therefore splendidly qualified to judge how far a book intended for the general reader can be understood by him. On the other hand I must take the accuracy of the book on trust, which the reputation of its author enables me to do.

The purpose of the book is to sketch the geological history of Great Britain and thus to afford an explanation of its scenery. The subject is hideously complicated. The chapter, for instance, on the geological evolution of the British Isles left me in despair: to grasp even the elements of this evolution one would have to memorise some fourteen maps each showing a different distribution of land and sea over the same area. (So far as I can gather the district round Cape Wrath is the only place on the mainland that has not at one time or another been submerged by the sea.) Often I had to read a sentence twice or even three times before I could follow it. For this my unfamiliarity with the subject was usually to blame: Mr. Dudley Stamp writes lucidly. (A passage on p. 30 utterly floored me until I decided that the printer must have gone right off the rails.) The action of volcanoes, of sedimentation, of glaciation, is made remarkably clear. And at the end I could congratulate myself on having acquired a few smatterings, though I shall be surprised if I often can recognise the history and structure of a landscape from its appearance, which is what I long to do. The whole science of geology is built upon deductions exquisite in their ingenuity; and the technique of this detective work is being continually improved, as for instance by the microscopic examination of the pollens in peat. Mr. Dudley Stamp's book can be recommended to every beginner who is prepared to take some trouble.

It does, however, present some unnecessary obstacles. The difficult terminology is inevitable: one has to cope with glints, krikes, varves, podsols, eskers, drumlins, berqschrunds and nunatooks; and Mr. Dudley Stamp is not always careful to define at once his rebarbative terms. Thus we come across "leaching" and "chert" on page 75, and for an explanation of their meaning we have to wait till pages 92 and 190 respectively. (But perhaps I was more ignorant than the average "general reader" who is already acquainted with leaching and cherts?) Again, having ploddingly mastered the general description of limestone on p. 73, I discovered that a considerable part of this description applied only to one of the three main types of limestone of which the following pages gave an account.

The book is generously illustrated: there are 74 excellent diagrams, 32 pages of colour plates (reproductions of coloured photographs, displeasing to the eye but informative), and 32 plates in what the publishers call black and white. (Actually they are in a horrid dark greenish-blue and white, and there seems no reason why the book should not aim at giving pleasure as well as instruction). What matters more is that the text never gives the page on which the plate to which the reader is referred can be found; and further to confuse him the coloured plates are given arabic numerals, the monochrome plates Latin numerals. On p. 69, for instance, you are referred to Plate 29. You then fumble in the later part of the volume and opposite p. 224 you come upon plate XXXI. So you begin looking earlier in the book, only to discover at last that Plate 29 comes further on than Plate XXXI. I had almost finished the book before I noticed that at the beginning a list of plates gave page references. But in a book where one has so often to refer to the plates, why not give their page numbers in the text? These may seem small difficulties, but when the reader has to make a constant effort of attention to follow the argument, they are vexing. The publishers will be wise to submit future volumes in this series before their publication to a reader who is as much of an ignoramus in such matters as I am.

RAYMOND MORTIMER.

TWO RUSSIANS

Tchaikovsky. A Symposium edited by GERALD ABRAHAM. *Lindsay Drummond.* 9s. 6d.

Tchaikovsky. By HERBERT WEINSTOCK. *Cassell.* 21s.

Mussorgsky. By M. D. CALVOCORESSI. *Dent.* 6s. 6d.

For years no adequate English study of Tchaikovsky, and all at once two! Fortunately they are complementary rather than competitive, Mr. Weinstock's being a straightforward, full-length biography, and the other volume a critical survey of the music in a series of chapters each allotted to a different author. This curious plan (which is also to be followed in forthcoming volumes on Schubert and Sibelius) leads to a more successful and homogeneous result than might be expected, largely owing to Mr. Abraham's editorial tact and skilful selection of contributors. The one chapter which remains obstinately unassimilated (and is none the less interesting on that account) is the discussion of Tchaikovsky's songs by an eminent Russian critic named Alshvang, of whom Mr. Abraham speaks with respect as the author of a forthcoming *magnum opus* on the composer. Professor Alshvang's elaborate technical analyses of individual songs are excellent, and I am glad to see this side of Tchaikovsky's genius more seriously treated than it would be by most English writers. On the other hand, his generalisations often reveal that gulf between Russia and the West to which we are becoming daily more accustomed. It is odd, for example, to read of Tchaikovsky's "invariable sense of moderation, beauty of musical form, simplicity and laconicism;" and even if these words are admitted to be *relatively* appropriate to his songs, our astonishment returns, two pages further on, when we reach a conclusion which appears to relate to his output as a whole: "The composer . . . never sank into sombre abysses of despair in his creative work. He constantly strove toward an optimistic acceptance of life. For his music is born of a living acceptance of reality . . ." At this point the English reader rubs his eyes and looks at the back of the book to assure himself that it *is* Tchaikovsky, and not Beethoven, who is under discussion.

The English members of the team have no such surprises to spring on us, unless we count Colin Mason's vehement dislike of the famous *Andante Cantabile* from the First String Quartet (which, for my ears at least, has never lost its magic), or Eric Blom's ingenious suggestion that the top-heavy structure of the First Piano Concerto might have been righted by the re-introduction of the big opening tune to form a peroration in contrapuntal harness with the second subject of the last movement: he even hints that Tchaikovsky himself may have originally intended to do something on these lines, and prints an example in music-type to show how easily the two themes could be made to go together! There is a sort of wild plausibility about this notion which, like Verrall's theory of the *Agamemnon*, bowls us over for at least a quarter of an hour. Of the other essays, Gerald Abraham on the operas and Ralph Wood on the miscellaneous orchestral works are particularly sound and valuable. Martin Cooper skilfully sums up the case for and against the symphonies, but no charge he can bring against them is more damaging than the composer's own often-quoted admission about the "forced passages, seams, gluings—in a word, artificialities" to be found in his symphonic writing. That remark, by the way, is typical of a vein of self-critical honesty in Tchaikovsky of which Mr. Lockspeiser surely makes too little in his opening chapter on the composer's personality—a chapter in which the sympathetic analyst is too often displaced by the stern judge. He holds up his hands in horror, for example, at the "duplicity" revealed in the following passage from Tchaikovsky's diary:

> To whomever I write and whatever I write about, I always worry about the impression the letter will make, not only on my correspondent but on any chance reader. Consequently, I pose. Sometimes I strive to make the tone of the letter simple and sincere, i.e., to make it appear so. But, except for letters written in moments of aberration, I am never my true self in my correspondence.

What strikes me in this passage is less the composer's "duplicity" than the precision of his self-knowledge. In point of fact almost all highly civilised people find it difficult to write absolutely unselfconscious letters, and the difficulty must be immensely enhanced when the writer is a world-famous figure, with a guilty secret in his private life and the certainty that a succession of biographers will ferret through his papers after his death.

Since the publication of *Beloved Friend* (a rather sensational American book, based on a part only of the voluminous Von Meck correspondence), the world has heard almost too much about Tchaikovsky's weaknesses, aberrations and neuroses. Thus I notice a tendency to exaggerate his addiction to drink (again self-confessed), whereas his enormous productivity, combined with his continual concert-tours throughout the civilised world, ought to make it evident how slight and intermittent must have been its hold on him. It is surely absurd to write about Tchaikovsky as though his intemperance were like that of Mussorgsky's last years; and it is one of Mr. Weinstock's many merits that, without ignoring any of the available evidence, he contrives to correct the somewhat lurid view of Tchaikovsky as a man which has become fashionable since the official veil of reticence has been pulled down. His book is solidly based on the immense amount of material which has appeared in Russia during the past twenty years, and here and there it contains some excessive, because insignificant, detail; but it is not dull. No imaginary conversations or melodramatic effects are needed to do justice to those episodes which will always make Tchaikovsky's life "stranger than fiction:" the tragi-comic marriage, and the prolonged, platonic epistolary love-affair (for such, in a sense, it was) with Mme von Meck. How galling the Hollywood producer must find it to be debarred from so tempting a theme, first by the taboo on sexual abnormality, and then by the awkward fact that two of the principal characters never meet! Doubtless, however, he will sooner or later find a way round such minor inconveniences.

Both these books have full lists of works; and so, of course, has the new volume on Mussorgsky in the Master Musicians series. Here, once again, we must acknowledge our debt to Mr. Abraham, whose editorial industry and general tidying-up propensities make him the Rimsky-Korsakov of English musicology—but, I hasten to add, a very scrupulous kind of Rimsky! In this latest instance he has put together and completed in the most admirable style a fragmentary manuscript left behind by Calvocoressi which in some chapters amounted to little more than a draft. It is part of his editorial scrupulousness that he insists on enclosing in square brackets every section, every sentence and even every word which he has added to, or altered from, the original text; but the ordinary reader, faced with this sort of thing, is inclined at moments to feel that scrupulousness can go too far:

> Of all his other [operatic] plans only one, *Boris Godunov*, was carried out to [completion].

I did not realise, before reading this admirable book, that not only *Boris* and *Khovanshchina*, but virtually the whole of Mussorgsky's output that one has ever heard (especially the wonderful songs) suffered drastic alteration at Rimsky-Korsakov's hands before publication. Now that the true texts are at last available, we ought to be given a chance to hear them, and if possible to compare them with the revisions. Here is an opportunity for the Third Programme to strike a blow for one of the most neglected of composers. It is absurd that the immense vogue for Tchaikovsky should be allowed to swamp the other Russians almost out of existence; in fact, after the luxurious emotionalism of Tchaikovsky, nothing could be more bracing than a prolonged course of Mussorgsky. They are, I suppose, the two greatest Russian composers; and, as Calvocoressi saw, they represent with a curious precision the positive and negative poles of Russian art: Mussorgsky, he said, "is the supreme type of the objective, non-egocentric artist, just as Tchaikovsky is the supreme type of subjective egocentric, unable to conceive any dramatic character except in terms of himself." DESMOND SHAWE-TAYLOR

CRIME AND SOCIETY

Criminal Justice and Social Reconstruction. By HERMANN MANNHEIM. (The International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction. Editor: KARL MANNHEIM). *Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner.* 15*s*.

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tive welcome because its vast stores of information and learning are spiced with plenty of provocation—to dissent and also, it is to be hoped, to thought and legislation.

The scope of the book is clearly indicated by its title. No criminal code is sacrosanct and we know it. This self-styled civilised world does not base its criminal justice on the Tables of Stone whether from Sinai or Rome. "The criminal law," says Dr. Mannheim has . . . been called one of the most faithful mirrors of a given civilisation reflecting the fundamental values on which the latter rests. Whenever these values change, the criminal law must follow suit. The present crisis in values . . . cannot fail to have profound repercussions in this field" (p. 2). In the 269 pages which follow, Dr. Mannheim examines the values behind the institution of the on-coming age with its growing collectiveness, the extent to which the existing system of criminal law respects or protects those values and the possibilities of drastic overhaul of adaptation. Law makes lawbreakers and society consciously or unconsciously chooses its criminals. The choice may be between the man who stole the goose from the common and the greater villain who stole the common from the goose, and the ancient couplet appears in this book. But there now arises also the problem of criminality in commoners who fail to plough up the common for wheat production in time of war or sell the goose for more than the legal maximum price. It is not a new but a resurgent problem. The medieval world recognised it. Only the centuries of unrestrained capitalism did not know a profiteer by sight.

Dr. Mannheim poses the problem of building up a system of criminal justice which will make the world safe for a planned society—and a good deal more dangerous for the determined individualist. He examines in Part I the laws for the protection of human life, those for the protection of sexual and family life, those for the protection of property and lastly the suppression of economic actions such as profiteering, tax evasion and fraud, monopoly, and the best methods of dealing with strikes, absenteeism, and so forth. Part II deals with the replanning of criminal justice, the development of administrative law, delegated legislation and the use of non-judicial tribunals, ways of using the expert and the scientist both in preventive work, in rendering predictable whether an act will be held to be criminal or not and in treatment of offenders, of making the administration of justice more democratic and of securing international co-operation in the study and planning of criminal justice. There is material for a score of books and the numerous footnotes, though mercifully brief, give a measure of the author's appetite for other people's books and the thoroughness of his study. So do the "Selected Reading Lists," classified to match the sections of the book. Before making any recommendation in any field (and he states his recommendations clearly and tersely at the end of each section) the author searches out and studies the facts, the law and administration of experiments the world over. He tells, for instance, what has been done in Germany, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Alberta, British Columbia, and U.S.A. in the matter of legalised sterilisation.

So much for the learning. Where lies the provocation? The reader must get the book and pick his own quarrels or join forces with Dr. Mannheim in his battles. But a few flashes may whet the appetite as do the glimpses of next week's pictures shown on this week's screen. Dr. Mannheim's chapter on the laws protecting the human life and person against, *inter alia*, castration, sterilisation and abortion opens with these words: "*The collectivist aspect involves the sifting of the human material to be used for the construction of the New World Order.*" (Italics mostly mine). It is only fair to say that his practical proposals are very small mice to emerge from this mountain of a claim. Perhaps it is not *his* claim for rather naïvely he says of sterilisation "We do not recommend its introduction in a Fascist state" (p. 35). But, as he says, the question is one of values. If the State, however widely and democratically it spreads its powers, is to decide not how people shall be governed but who shall exist to be governed at all, the time is come to ask anew—Is the State made for man or man for the State? Real Socialists will surely be on the side of the common man as an end in himself. And what will the scientific man's answer be? Sir James Jeans wrote: "Science cannot hope ever to discover the true nature of the ingredients of the material universe; from the nature of things this lies for ever beyond the ken." How much the more then does the true nature of man lie beyond our ken. And the moral, I suggest, is that acknowledging our ignorance, we should use what skill and knowledge and human material is available to "make do and mend." Dr. Mannheim's book should help and stimulate many in this task.

CICELY M. CRAVEN

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The United Nations Organisation Handbook. By ANDREW BOYD. *Pilot Press.* 8s. 6d.

In the last few years, we have had our fill of charters and conferences. Even the specialist has found it difficult to keep pace with the elaborate machinery which, with compromise and good intentions, has been slowly established to regulate international relations. Yet, if Uno and its associated bodies are to survive—and nobody disputes that the effort must be made—public knowledge of their powers and functions is as essential as the desire of the States Member to make them work successfully. Mr. Boyd's account of this complicated framework is admirably done. He has included all the necessary documents. Concisely but adequately, he has explained the job that each part of Uno is designed to do and the means it has been given to do it. Throughout the book, he has sensibly chosen to illustrate each point with practical examples drawn from the work of Uno or its auxiliaries. The book, in short, is an invaluable source of information, supplemented by a commentary which brings the legal forms of the organisations on to the more intelligible plane of politics. This book is not only useful to anyone who takes a close interest in the world around us: it is indispensable to those in public life.

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No. 870

Competition set by Raymond Mortimer

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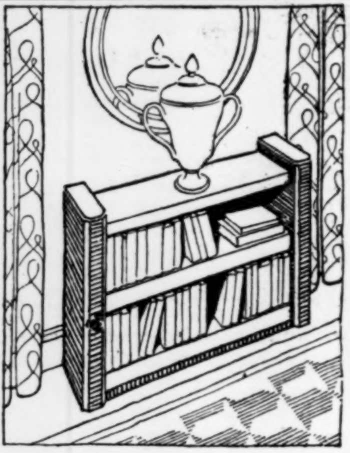

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RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 867

Set by W. R.

The usual prizes are offered for 16 lines of verse calculated to bring sleep when repeated by a sufferer from insomnia.

Report by W. R.

A great many entries, of which some, though excellent as verse, seemed to me ill-suited to their function. (Surely the first rule is to evade the notion that sleep is hard to attain.) Most competitors used the subjects that Wordsworth used:

> A flock of sheep that leisurely pass by,
> One after one; the sound of rain, and bees
> Murmuring; the fall of rivers, winds and seas,
> Smooth fields, white sheets of water, and pure sky . . .

One entry I had to reject for the bad reason that I could not understand the language in which it was written, Welsh. After much hesitation I regretfully set aside the admirable entries of W. R. Burns, Frank Buckand, Ian Cranna, Veritas, Aeroc, Jock, Hassall Pitman, N. P. Meadway, Willy Tadpole, G. J. Blundell, and Neil A. V. McCormick; and I recommend a guinea each to G. E. C., Oliver Coburn (ingeniously hypnotic), R. J. P. Hewison, Allan M. Laing, Ethel Talbot Scheffauer, and Sylvia Tatham.

No breeze, no shade, only the noonday glare
Over the plain and to the distant hill.
The fields lie sleeping 'neath the quivering air,
And lines of poplars stand erect and still.

A load of hay comes slowly up the road,
The old slow horse plods heavily on his way:
Across the plain he pulls his massive load,
And trails the sweet scent of the sun baked hay.

Now, as he drives, the farmer's man may laze.
The reins hang loosely from his idle hands.
He sleeps, then lifts his heavy eyes to gaze
Where far away the half-made hayrick stands.

The heavy, lumbering wheels turn round and round
Across the plain, past sleeping field and trees.
The heavy hoofs plod on; no other sound
In all the silent plain—no shade, no breeze.

G. E. C.

THE DREAMER

Between the trees
  The dreamer steals.
The evening breeze
  His fever heals.
Beneath his feet
  He sees the stream.
To dream is sweet,
  And he will dream.

Each tree reveals
  Its leaves of green.
The dreamer feels
  A deep serene.
The heedless sheep
  Their bleating cease.
And he will sleep
  In evening peace.

Oliver Coburn

Warm is the lullabed wherein I lie,
Warm as the waters of a southern sea,
Warm as the cloudlets of an evening sky
Of which itself a cloudlet seems to be.

Softly my bed, as fresh rose-petal soft,
As down or cloud with golden borders curled,
Rides in unanchored indolence aloft
Above the darkening and fretful world.

Light are my limbs and lazily they melt
Into the bedclothes' easy gossamer,
Sublimed their elements and hardly felt—
More air than heavy earth, more fire than air.

Warm, soft and lazylight my bed, my cloud
Light, soft and warm, fleece of a golden sheep
Of golden flock that, slowly told aloud,
Convoys me to the woolly edge of sleep.

R. J. P. Hewison

My eyelids droop like folded wings,
And I must think of sleepy things:
Of blazing suns in tropic seas;
And drowsy drone of bumble bees;
Small crested waves that o'er and o'er
Monotonously wash the shore;
A tiny shallop drifting where
No sounds disturbs the summer air;
A hammock in a garden slung,
By scented breezes barely swung;
Of oft-repeated, foolish runes,
And larvae cosy in cocoons . . .
Then I shall fix my sightless eyes
On some dark point beyond the skies;
And I shall listen for the deep
Dead dulling silences of sleep.

Allan M. Laing

With stealth of snow the silence falls
Muted all sound within these walls
No clamourous clock the ear alarms
The music of soft stillness charms.

The curtains of the night are drawn
And with day's noise daylight is gone
The fire is smoored, no faintest spark
Profanes the unreflecting dark.

Me unreflecting here reclined
To silence deaf, to darkness blind
Oblivion's unnoticed hand
Leads to the borders of her land.

Dim borders none can tell how crossed
Or when the traveller is lost
Or when the traveller is found
Within this unremembered ground.

Robert Murray

Gold-headed drowsy sunflowers, kissed so long
They droop their heavy heads at evensong
So that no blundering, big-hipped bumble bee
Murmuring to a minor melody
Can find their store of honey, dripping slow
Drop by long drop to the brown stream below,
A dark and zippling stream where dragon-flies
Poise on some mossy stone that half-embedded lies
In sun-baked ooze. A slowly homing sun
That from low clouds his rosy course has run
Over lush meadows where the slow kine stand
Their large eyes contemplating the green land
The pastures fringed with heather and low trees
Long burdened with innumerable bees
Where warm white woolly ever-weaving sheep
Slide softly down dim avenues of sleep.

Ethel Talbot Scheffauer

Softly through the summer snow
Two by two my white sheep go;
Softly, softly slip my sheep
Through the white-barred gates of sleep;
So like homer pigeons home
All my errant thoughts shall come.

Now I slumber, now I rest,
On this pillow, on this breast;
Breast of swansdown, breast of swan,
Such as Leda slept upon;
Yet more white, more cool, more soft,
Like a cumulus cloud aloft;
'Tis maybe an Angel's breast,
Not a cloud, on which I rest;
If so be, these tired eyes
Shall awake in Paradise.

Silvia Tatham

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